BOOKMAN

MAR 1 1916

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Interesting Books on Varied Subjects.

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Mr. Yorke writes with ease, swing, and vigour. There stands out from it all the hardy and hearty ring of the man who knows, the expressiveness of the man who appreciates, the force of the man who is earnest, the fire and freedom of originality, and the enthusiasm of the patriot. . . . . The poems are replete with merit, with character and with genuine interest.

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The Bookman.

"I am a Bookman."—*James Russell Lowell.*

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NOTICES.

All communications intended for the Editor must be addressed to the Editor of The Bookman, St. Paul's House, Warwick Square, London, E.C.

A preliminary letter of inquiry should be sent to the Editor before any manuscript is submitted for his consideration.

News Notes.

The March Bookman will contain a special article on Stephen Phillips by Sir Sidney Colvin; articles on "The Peace of the Augustans," by Thomas Seccombe; "Delane," by Walter Sichel, etc.

Mr. Stephen Wheeler is preparing for publication a new edition of Landor's "Letters of Calvus," of which he possesses a unique copy. He has for long past been an enthusiastic admirer of the poet and his work, and some few years ago Lady Graves-Sawle (who is a descendant of Rose Aylmer) presented him with what was practically the whole of Landor's effects, including this copy of the "Letters of Calvus," which is revised in Landor's hand and filled with valuable and hitherto unpublished commentary and notes. These "Letters" thunderously denounce, in Landor's characteristic vein, the despotism that in his day was devastating Europe, and much that he wrote has become curiously applicable again to current events. The book met with such a lukewarm reception that Landor seems to have suppressed it, in his irascible fashion, and so far as Mr. Wheeler can discover there is only one copy, besides his own, in existence, and that is in the British Museum.

Messrs. Longmans have just issued "The Spirit of Man," an anthology in French and English made by Mr. Robert Bridges, the Poet Laureate. It is an anthology of a new kind, the prose and verse quotations being mixed together and so arranged in context as to exhibit the aspects of life on a spiritual basis.

"The Half Priest," a new novel by Hamilton Drummond, will be published immediately by Messrs. Stanley Paul & Co.

Mr. W. L. George, whose new novel, "The Strangers' Wedding," Mr. Fisher Unwin is publishing, has been working since October last as an Assistant Section Officer in the Ministry of Munitions. He superintends the filling with explosives of fuses and detonators, and finds that his duties take up nearly sixty hours a week.

We regret to record the death of Mr. Reginald R. Nye, a promising young novelist recently discovered by Messrs. Sampson, Low & Co. They published his novel, "Marthe," a little over two years ago; it

met with immediate success, and was last month reissued in a cheaper edition. Mr. Nye joined the Public Schools Battalion at the outbreak of the war and had been for some time at the front, where he obtained the rank of Captain.

The Oxford Press is publishing shortly a volume of poems by Robert Sterling, a Lieutenant in the Royal Scots Fusiliers who was killed in action on St. George's Day, 1915. Before entering Pembroke College, in 1912, Mr. Sterling had been at school at Glasgow Academy, and later at Sedbergh. At Oxford he won the Newdigate Prize of 1914 with a poem entitled "The Burial of Sophocles." The forthcoming book, which will be prefaced with a memoir, will contain "The Burial of Sophocles" and several other and hitherto unpublished poems, some of them written during Mr. Sterling's school-days at Sedbergh, and some whilst he was at Oxford.

The eleventh volume of that unique and always interesting magazine *The Dickensian*, edited by Mr. B. W. Matz, is as fresh and as rich in varied Dickens lore as ever. There is an article in which Mr. Edwin Pugh confesses to the shocking heresy of loathing the Cherryble brothers; and capital articles on "The Original of John Browdie," by E. T. Jacques; "Dickens on Animals," by Peggy Webling; "The Coffee House on Ludgate Hill," by O. Sack; "Dickens and Some Modern Authors," by Willoughby Matchett; "Charles Dickens and Love," by Arthur Hood; and many another. The editor's notes are crisp and full of interest, and, as usual, there are numerous portraits and Dickensian pictures. Any lover of Dickens who is unfortunate enough not to take in the magazine, will be well advised to spend four shillings and possess himself of this bound volume of the 1915 numbers of it.

Mr. John Murray has just published a new edition of the manual on "Machine Gun Training" which was one of the later additions to his invaluable Imperial Army series.

Kate Douglas Wiggin (Mrs. Riggs).

A new portrait.

In three attractive little volumes Messrs. Cecil Palmer & Hayward have published collections of the National Proverbs of Belgium, of Serbia, and of Holland. Belgium supplies an appropriate proverb for herself in "To fall but stand up again is no shame"; and one equally appropriate for the Kaiser in "Who raises himself gets humbled." The same vein of homely common sense runs through the proverbial wisdom of all peoples, yet each has characteristic differences of both matter and manner.

Mr. James Milne's poignant sketches of the war at home and abroad, "News from Somewhere," published last autumn by Messrs. Chapman & Hall, has met with a very gratifying reception, and has just been issued in the United States by Messrs. Putnam.

Mr. Heinemann is publishing a series of "Soldiers' Tales of the Great War," each volume being a record of personal experiences. The first, "With my Regiment from the Aisne to La Bassée," is already out. The second, "The Epic of Dixmude," is in preparation.

"A Frenchwoman's Notes on the War," by Mlle. Claire de Pratz, who was in Brittany when the war started, has just been published by Messrs. Constable.

MRS. R. L. STEVENSON'S FUNERAL IN SAMOA.

BY W. ROBERTS.

Very little public notice has been directed to a ceremony of special interest to lovers of R. L. Stevenson. This was the transference last autumn of the cremated remains of Mrs. R. L. Stevenson from Santa Barbara to Samoa, and the solemn rites attending the depositing of the casket containing them in the tomb of her husband, the famous novelist. It was Mrs. Stevenson's own wish to be so buried, but various circumstances prevented the realisation of that wish until some eighteen months after her death. To the tomb has been added a tablet, inscribed with the beautiful speech of Ruth to Naomi, taken from the Samoan Bible: "Whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried." Stevenson died in 1894, his widow surviving him twenty years, dying on February 20th, 1914.

The casket was taken from California to Samoa by Mrs. Salisbury Field (better-known, perhaps, to Stevensonians as Mrs. Isobel Strong, the novelist's stepdaughter) and her husband, Mr. Field, the author of "Twin Beds" and other successful plays. I had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Field recently in New York, and of gleaning some particulars of her recent visit to Samoa. Mrs. Field found little material change in the islands. The affection with which the memory of the novelist is held by the chiefs has developed almost into a religion. Nearly all the chiefs with whom Stevenson had been associated twenty and more years ago attended the last rites of his widow, and these rites were carried out in accordance with the time-honoured customs of the Samoans. The high chiefs, Malietoa Tanu and Tamasese Tupua, were accompanied by a number of others. His Excellency Colonel Logan and Mrs. Logan, who now occupy Vailima as Government House, acted as hosts of the large party, which started from Vailima, the ladies in white dresses, and the men, for the most part, in uniform.

Mr. Salisbury Field headed the procession, carrying the bronze urn containing the ashes of Mrs. Stevenson enveloped in one of the many fine mats (among the most precious possessions of the Samoans) which had been presented to the family at the time of Stevenson's death. Next to him came Mrs. Field and Vaaiga (the wife of Tamasese), each also carrying one of the Samoan mats. On reaching the

Funeral of Mrs. R. L. Stevenson.

The procession on Mount Vaea.

tomb on the plateau of Mount Vaea the company gathered about in a circle; the Governor read the Church of England service for the dead, and Filemoni, the native pastor delivered an impressive address in the Samoan language. A small space had already been cut into the base of the tomb and filled with fine mats and flowers; these were removed and the ashes of Mrs. Stevenson interred, the natives singing a hymn in Samoan.

After the service the party descended the hill, and in the middle of the Road of the Loving Hearts ("Ala o le Lotoalofa"), in the making of which most of the chiefs present had, in the novelist's time, taken a practical part, a long table had been spread composed of leaves and palm branches, and here a solemn Kava ceremony was held in the ancient Samoan fashion. Colonel Logan delivered a brief address, expressing his conviction that it would have been a great pleasure to the great chief who is buried on the hill to know that the British flag is flying over his old home; and, although "the occasion is a sad one in one respect, it is pleasant in another, for Stevenson and his wife are together again." The High Chief Tamasese also spoke, as did others; and then the party adjourned to a Samoan feast (Taumafataga) which was laid out in the Ala o le Lotoalofa. Before the party dispersed, Mrs. Field, in bidding farewell, thanked the members for honouring the memory of her dear mother, and stated that "it will be very hard for us to leave Samoa, but we know that our dear ones on Mount Vaea are resting on the most beautiful land in the world, among the kindest and tenderest people."

It may be added that Mrs. Salisbury Field has founded at Apia a scholarship for three girls, each to have "Fani" (the Samoan form of Mrs. Stevenson's name) added to her own name, and each to take every year, on March 10th, a bunch of flowers and place it on the Stevenson tomb.

THE BOOKMAN PRIZE COMPETITIONS.

FEBRUARY, 1916.

Answers to these competitions (each on a separate sheet bearing the name and address of the sender) should be forwarded not later than the 14th of the month to

"The Prize Page," THE BOOKMAN, Messrs. Hodder & Stoughton, Warwick Square, E.C.

Colonial and foreign readers please note that Competitions II., IV. and V. are the same each month, and that for the next two months the 1st prize will be for the best original lyric.

SPECIAL NOTICE.—*Competitors must please keep copies of their verses; the Editor cannot undertake to return them.*

I.—A PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA is offered for the best original lyric.

II.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best quotation from English verse applicable to any review or the name of any author or book appearing in this number of THE BOOKMAN. Preference will be given to quotations of a humorous nature.

III.—We offer a PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS for the best war-time prayer in four lines of original verse.

IV.—A PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA is offered for the best review, in not more than one hundred words, of any recently published book. Competitors should give the names of Authors and Publishers at head of review.

V.—A copy of THE BOOKMAN will be sent *post free* for *twelve months* to the sender of the best suggestion for THE BOOKMAN Competitions. The Editor reserves the right to use any suggestion submitted.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS FOR JANUARY.

I.—The PRIZE OF ONE GUINEA for the best original lyric is divided and HALF A GUINEA each is awarded to Vivien Ford, of 12, Priory Road, Tyndall's Park, Bristol, and Ivan Adair, of 54, Palmerston Road, Dublin, for the following:

FATE THE JESTER.

Not in the golden flame of the ideal,
  Like moths, we burned our wings;
Ours was the hearthstone radiance of real
  And tender, homely things.

Is it not then the irony of Fate
  That we are torn apart
By hazards all too manifestly great,
  For which we have no heart?

Without the lust of gambling, we must stake
  Our all upon the dice;
Supremely unheroic, we must make
  A splendid sacrifice.

We are the tragic actors of the piece
  In motley dressed, to lend
Some merriment (at destiny's caprice)
  To our ignoble end.

And so we have no palace built of dreams
  To fall in rainbow shards;
And yet—how doubly pitiful it seems,
  Our shattered house of cards!

VIVIEN FORD.

COMMUNION.

I trim my lamp of Faith and wait,
Oh! Saviour, near to Mercy's Gate.
So dim the flame, that canst Thou see
The longing eyes that watch for Thee?
'Mid many prayers, oh! canst thou hear
The wordless sigh that seeks Thine ear?

Oh! Christ, I see no diadem,
But only touch Thy vesture hem.
It is enough, if Thou dost mark
My fingers groping in the dark.
If Thou wilt lay Thine hand on mine,
I pass, contented with the sign.

IVAN ADAIR.

Photo by Norman, Ipswich.

Miss Evelyn R. Garratt,

whose new novel, "Betty of Rushmore,' will be published this spring by Messrs. Alston Rivers.

We also select for printing:

WIND BEFORE RAIN.

The wind across the marshes is blowing full and free,
Coming as a benison o'er leagues of foam-flecked sea;
And the short burnt grass is sighing, "I am withering, I am dying!"
But the wind sweeps low to whisper, "Rain is following after me."

The wind across the marshes is blowing cheerily,
His breath is heavy laden with the salt tang of the sea;
In the west dark clouds are showing, sheep are bleating, kine are lowing,
And the Herald Wind is crying, "Rain is following after me!"

(Ruby Lynn, Burnham Norton, Lynn, Norfolk.)

THE GOLDEN STAIR.

I built a golden stairway
To lead to Happiness,
A pleasant way, a fair way
Of Pleasure and Success.

I left the crowded highway
Of those who fought and failed,
For their way was not my way—
My stair was golden-railed!

But when I reached the gateway
That crowned my gilded stair,
I looked below—and straightway
My Happiness lay there!

(Violet D. Chapman, Sorrento, Burnham, Somerset.)

TO ——

O would your heart a mirror were,
That so my heart could see
The love I give reflected there
And given back to me.
So could you love no more than I,
And I no less than you:
Thus might I guard your constancy
And keep the balance true.

O would your heart an echo were,
That to my heart alone
The wind your tenderness might bear,
Dear echo of my own.
But these are dreams, and dreams are vain;
Your heart no mirror seems—
Yet must my poor heart sleep again,
And dream its useless dreams.

(Margaret Tragett, 63, Wynnstay Gardens, Kensington, W.)

We also select for special commendation the lyrics sent by Marjorie Crosbie (Wolverhampton), Lady Sybil Smith (Chigwell), W. Siebenhaar (Perth, W. Australia), Private Reginald Gray (London, W.C.), Ida May (Barnes), May Herschel Clarke (Woolwich), Charles Dimond (Nottingham), Lilian Holmes (Charing), May O'Rourke (Dorchester), Rev. T. Gilbert (Walsall), Mona Douglas (Isle of Man), Arthur Thrush (London, W.C.), G. Duncan Grey (Weston-super-Mare), Agnes E. M. Baker (Kilburn), Winifred A. Cook (Birkenhead), Rose Francis (Lynn), Lettie Cole (Pontrilas), Mary F. Lawson (York), Private Cecil H. Rolfe (Richmond), Caroline Coxham (New Malden), A. G. St. Fillan (Edinburgh), Blanche Byrom (Hampstead), Irene L. Watts (Streatham), Beryl Carter (Bexhill), Mrs. A. G. Guthrie (Edinburgh), Wilfred W. Kershaw (Southport), J. Livingstone Duncan (Rothesay), A. C. Wells (Beverley), Kathleen A. Brainbridge (Kidderminster), J. Drummond C. Honfries (Kensington), E. Cornell (Bromley), Rex (Greenock), F. M. S. (Bournemouth), Winifred Barrows (Glasgow), A. E. M. Bayliss (Stroud), A. W. Jay (Devonport), Constance Ursula Kerr (West Hartlepool), Pax (Sheffield), Lilian Dixon (Bletchley), Dorothy M. Bunn (Hull), Evelina Ida San Garde (Accrington), G. M. Hort (Harlesden), Mrs. J.

Miss Carine Cadby,

author and part-illustrator of the charming book for children, "A Doll's Day," published recently by Messrs. Mills & Boon.

Ford (Oxford), John E. Rose (Bristol), H. M. Barrow (Hastings), Dorothy C. Jones (Stourbridge), T. A. King (Birmingham), E. M. Schonberg (Northwood), A. Elton Paterson (Finsbury Park), Emily Kington (Blairgowrie), Doris Dean (Burnley), W. C. Reedy (Forest Gate), Adele Anderson (Maidenhead), S. B. Irene Bell (Highgate), Honor Yeomans (Hereford), S. M. Northcott (Colwyn Bay), Eileen Carfrae (Brixton), Beatrice Bunting (West Hartlepool), E. R. Faraday (Orleton), Frank A. Hellawell (Newbiggin), Y. W. Rogan (Aberystwyth), Eileen Newton (Whitby), R. Scott Frayon (Silsden), Octavia Gregory (Parkstone), Lilian Daly (Ceylon), Henry Thorley (Stockport)

II.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best quotation is awarded to Mrs. Monk, of Pendrea, Truro, Cornwall, for the following:

THE SOUL OF GERMANY. By DR. T. F. A. SMITH. (Hutchinson.)

"How I wonder what you are!"
JANE TAYLOR.

We also select for printing:

WHAT GERMANY THINKS. By DR. T. F. A. SMITH. (Hutchinson.)

"I am monarch of all I survey."
COWPER, *Alexander Selkirk.*

(Rev. Edwin C. Lansdown, 159, Holly Lane, West Smethwick, Birmingham.)

ONE OF A COMPANY. By MISS J. TALBOT. (Herbert Tomkinson.)

"In dismal dumps he lived to own
The folly of trying to swarm alone."
W. S. GILBERT, *The Independent Bee.*

(Charles Powell, 67, Dickenson Road, Manchester.)

ZEPPELIN NIGHTS. By VIOLET HUNT AND FORD MADOX HUEFFER. (The Bodley Head.)

"In the cellarage."
SHAKESPEARE, *Hamlet, I., v.*

(Ernest A. Fuller, 10, The Circus, Greenwich, S. E.)

"Put out the light."
SHAKESPEARE, *Othello.*

(B, Swift, 34, Ferme Park Road, Stroud Green, N.)

"Shall I draw the curtain?"
SHAKESPEARE, *The Winter's Tale, V., iii.*

(E. A. Scrutton, "Ivinghoe," Wellington Street, Slough.)

III.—The PRIZE OF THREE NEW BOOKS for the best appreciation of the Special Constable in four or eight lines of original verse is awarded to Edith Rutter-Leatham, of The White House, Durham, for the following:

THE SPECIAL CONSTABLE.

His shoulders are a trifle bent, his head a little grey:
For over forty years he's borne the burden of the day;
So whilst the cosy slippers wait, and the children chirp and twit,
He reaches down his overcoat, to do his "little bit!"
Into the darkened street he looks—into a night of stars—
With but one wish within his soul, that middle-age debars!
His shoulders are a trifle bent, but his heart is not as they—
Ah, mother, clasp the armlet-pin, and kiss the years away!

The six best of the many other appreciations received are by George A. Vann (Sheffield), Lottie Hoskins (Birmingham), George B. Parks (London, W.C.), Frank Rhodes (Scarborough), Doris Westwood (Sutton Coldfield), Norman Birkett (Birmingham).

Photo by J. Russell & Sons. **Mrs. Baillie Reynolds,** whose new novel, "The Daughter Pays" Messrs. Cassell are publishing.

IV.—The PRIZE OF HALF A GUINEA for the best review in not more than a hundred words is awarded to G. E. Wakerley, of 19, Chaworth Road, West Bridgford, Notts, for the following:

MY HARVEST. By RICHARD WHITEING. (Hodder & Stoughton.)

At a time when many people have degenerated into their "anecdotage" Mr. Whiteing serenely garners the harvest of past years in these pleasant recollections of journalistic experiences in London, the provinces, and the chief capitals of Europe. Great figures flit across the pages, and genial impressions abound of men, women and movements of the last half-century. Paris Monarchal, Paris Republican—with Hugo the uncrowned King, Spain in revolution, Russia and America with their varied problems, a glimpse of Verestchagin, an interview with Gladstone, studies of Mrs. Besant and Bernard Shaw, with notes on clubs and salons make fascinating reading.

We also select for printing:

THE PROMISE. By JAMES B. HENDRYX. (Putnam.)

This is a book that it does one good to read at any time—it is permeated with fresh air and with the consciousness of great things in the doing! A big man in the making is one of the grandest things to be seen in this world, and in "The Promise" this sight is for the seeing! "Grit" tells wherever it may be found, and its toughness is acknowledged by all who come up against one who possesses it! There is a splendour about the sheer simplicity of the folk therein portrayed that should not be missed! *Verbum sap!*

(Miss J. A. Jenkins, Edge Hill College, Liverpool)

FIGHTING FRANCE. By EDITH WHARTON. (Macmillan.)

This little book presents a simple, straightforward account of things seen and opinions formed from first-hand knowledge, together with vivid anecdotes of incidental happenings. Miss Wharton is one of the few women who had frequent opportunity for visiting various parts of the actual war area, and has even been in the firing line. She handles her subject in a fresh and skilful manner, and tales of tragedy, humour and heroism abound. Fearless must have been the investigator, and great her power of description, to have given us such a faithful record of the great world war.

(Constance U. Kerr, 72, Milton Road, West Hartlepool.)

We also select for special commendation the twelve reviews sent in by Rev. R. H. A. Cotton (Ealing), Miss N. R. McIntosh (Birmingham), Marjorie Gibbon (Clapton), L. H. Cook (Stockport), L. M. Haime (Cardiff), L. Cobbold (Cambs.), Ernest A. Fuller (Greenwich), M. H. Menzies (Hampstead), Jessie Jackson (Beverley), Margaret Tragett (London, W.), Halcyon (Wandsworth), Edith Longson (Acton).

V.—The PRIZE OF ONE YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION to THE BOOKMAN is awarded to the Rev. J. Napier Milne, of 2, Beech Grove, Newland, Hull.

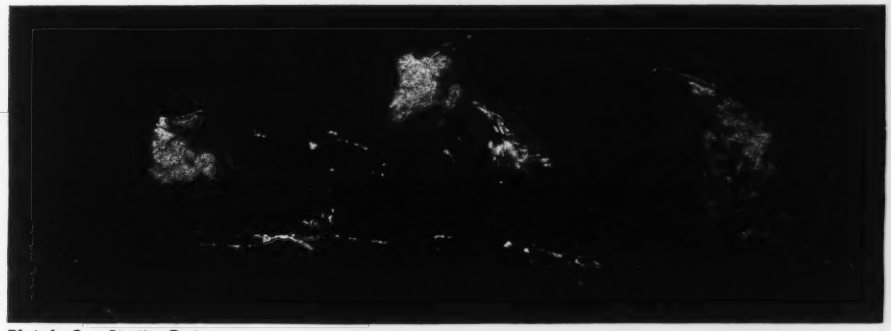


Photo by Gene Stratton-Porter.

THE READER.

GENE STRATTON-PORTER.

AN APPRECIATION

I WAS never of those who persuade themselves that a book is to be judged by its sales, and that a small circulation is usually a sure sign of peculiar merit. Limited editions are of no use, as a rule, except for authors of pronounced limitations. It is not difficult to condescend to the general public and talk of popularity as if it were something so accessible to everybody that even superior persons can only by prayer and fasting escape being afflicted with it; but, after all, Tennyson, Carlyle, Macaulay, Dickens, Thackeray, Trollope, were as popular in their own day as they are in ours. Of course, there were novelists, poets, miscellaneous writers among their contemporaries who enjoyed much smaller circulations, but nobody pretends now that those unpopular ones were the real great authors of the Victorian era. Let us be reasonable in such matters and concede that there must needs be some more than ordinary virtue in books that triumphantly appeal to all sorts and conditions of men and women, to the lettered as well as to the comparatively unlettered, and that popularity and unpopularity are, in themselves, criticism of a most practical kind.

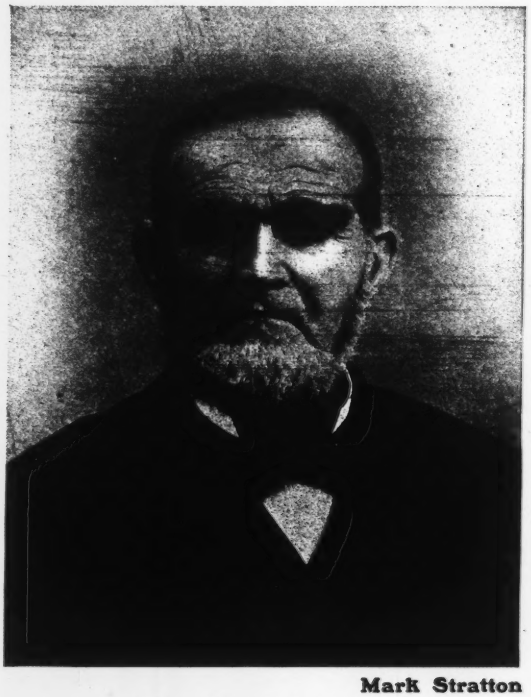
So when I am told that Mrs. Gene Stratton-Porter has over two million readers I conclude that her books must be well worth reading; for I am no freak that I should fail to be interested in what interests so powerfully two million and more of my fellow men and women. Yet, I confess, I turned to them with a certain prejudice, for I am an incorrigible town-dweller, taking a far keener delight in the vagaries of human life and character than in birds and moths and the furry populace of the fields and woods, and I had heard that some of Mrs. Porter's books were nature studies, and that even her novels were steeped in a wonderful lore of flowers, insects, birds, fishes, four-footed creatures—of all those little brothers of humanity that live in country places.

If I opened "The Song of the Cardinal" with any dim notion that its hero was an ecclesiastical dignitary, I was promptly undeceived by the first lines of the first chapter: "He darted through the orange orchard searching for slugs for his breakfast, and between whiles he rocked on the branches and sang over his message of encouragement to men. The song of the cardinal was overflowing with joy." And, let me say at once, the books of Gene Stratton-Porter are, in that respect, like the song of the cardinal. They are full of the joy of life and the beauty of it, the happiness that you gain by giving it to others, the goodness and the kindliness of all nature, even including the human portion thereof. The spell of these nature books lays such a hold upon you—they did upon me, townsman as I am—that you grow as delightedly absorbed in that story of the exquisite red cardinal and his mate and their small brood; in the ways and habits of the animals and birds that make up "The Music of the Wild"; and in the miraculous insect world that is revealed in "The Moths of the Limberlost," as in any tale of the loves and sorrows, the passions and follies of your own species. Yet they are nature studies pure and simple—the studies of a patient and a loving observer who has kept watch over the creatures of field and forest, has lived among them and given her heart to them, and so learning their most intimate secrets has had the skill to make them known to us in a fashion so subtly pleasing as to make instruction enjoyable for the student and enjoyment instructive for the general reader. They strike a new note; there is nothing quite like them to be found between the covers of any other author. The

Gene Stratton-Porter.

fascination of them lies as much in the exactness and easy intimacy of the knowledge they convey as in the freshness of style and the infectious enthusiasm with which they convey it. I am not surprised that they are being largely used now as text-books in high schools and universities. They do not administer knowledge as if it were a sort of medicine, but lightly, entertainingly, as if it were what it really is—the greatest and finest source of amusement. At the end of "Moths of the Limberlost" Mrs. Porter says that she had loved the work of making it; certainly she has the art of making what pleased her pleasing to others, and, judging by results, I should say, therefore, that she must have loved making every book she has written.

She has written two other books in this kind: "Birds of the Bible," and "What I Have Done with Birds"; and six novels in which her nature studies play a secondary part. Many readers rank "Freckles" and "At the Foot of the Rainbow," which is a sort of continuation of "Freckles," as the best of her novels; some give "Laddie" this pride of place. I do not question their judgment, but merely as a personal preference I incline to give first place to "The Girl of the Limberlost," and second, perhaps, to "The Harvester." There is a curiously haunting quality about the pitifully tragic figure of Mrs. Comstock, whose heart had been so frozen with grief that she had grown habitually harsh in her treatment of Elnora, her daughter, and almost incapable of showing the deep love she actually had for her. Two of the most dramatic moments in "The Girl of the Limberlost" come when Mrs. Comstock learns that she has for years cherished a grief that she need not have felt, and when she is shocked into a poignant realisation of her unkindness towards her child. She forms the darker thread in a story which takes its light from the finely simple, large-hearted Wesley Sinton and his wife, Margaret; from the quaint youngster, Billy; from the friendly, helpful "Bird Woman"; and above all from Elnora, who is just such another brave, indomitable spirit as Freckles, of the book that is named after him. The pathos and homely heroism of the resolute struggle she makes to get herself educated, despite her mother's insensate opposition, grips and moves the reader irresistibly.



Mark Stratton
Father of Gene Stratton-Porter.

"Michael O'Halloran" is a story of town life, but the flowers and birds and woodland creatures find their way into it and help to give it the atmosphere and unique charm that belong to all Mrs. Porter's work; and the rest of her books have the swamps and streams and green wilderness of the Limberlost for their setting and environment. Instead of scouring the earth for material Mrs. Porter has wisely stayed at home and discovered a whole magical world in the Limberlost, as Mr. Hardy has found one of a very different order within the boundaries of Wessex. "D'you ever stop to think how full this world is o' things to love, if your heart's just big enough to let 'em in?" asks old Abram, in "The Song of the Cardinal"; and it is because her heart is big enough for this that her books have gathered into themselves so much of the world's beauty and the things in it that are worth knowing and loving. They are not unmindful of the darker, sadder side of life, but they probe to the soul of goodness in things evil, and they teach the old eternal truths that there is always more sunshine than shadow, and that our days are longer than our nights.

It is no small achievement to have written books that are genuine contributions to natural science and to have so written them that they are not only invaluable to the scientist but have become the favourite reading of the million who have hitherto had no taste in that direction; and to have written novels that are phenomenally popular with the crowd and yet win the suffrages of those who do not usually count themselves among the readers of fiction. "Whatever anybody succeeds in," says old Abram again, "it's success 'cos they so love it that they put the best o' theirselves into it"; and that is the success that has come to Gene Stratton-Porter, and the reason why it has come to her. C. W.

Hopewell Farm,
where Gene Stratton-Porter was born. Catalpa showing on the left is the one Little Sister climbed to watch for Laddie.

MY WORK AND MY CRITICS.

By Gene Stratton-Porter.

IT is difficult for me to write of the work I have done or yet hope to do, as I have had no previous experience, never having penned a line on the subject for any home periodical. It always had appeared to me that my books showed their plan and voiced their purpose so plainly that they required no explanation; yet a few criticisms sent to me recently prove that what I am striving to do is not always understood; so in coming before a new audience with eleven books at one time, it is, perhaps, the part of discretion to attempt to establish my plans and purposes clearly. It is now quite plain to me that had I taken time and pains to do this at home in America, from the beginning of my work, I might have escaped some recent most unjust criticism, for which I was poorly prepared, after twelve years of practically unqualified praise.

Primarily, I must have been born for a field worker; since all my life I have made everything else subserve this, it seems to me that it must be "the thing I was born to do."

I came into the world at a time when the womanhood of our land was in fierce recoil against the hardships of pioneer life as it steadily edged its way westward. It was a common thing in my childhood to hear a mother fiercely declare that her children should not be permitted to endure the hardships that had fallen to her lot. Every effort was strained to make a merchant or a professional man of her son, some mysterious thing constantly referred to as a "lady" of her daughter. The boy usually "arrived," because fine opportunity for his career lay everywhere; but the fate of the "lady" was sad indeed.

Her grandmother had sat on a log clutching her baby and a few possessions, watching the forest with fear-strained eyes for a glimpse of savage faces, while her man felled trees for their cabin; frequently she was forced to help at this rough work herself. Her mother had started married life in a frame house with rag carpets, patchwork quilts and coal stoves; but the acquirement of these grandeurs had so worn the flesh, she was in revolt against the same for her children. Hence the unhappy fate of the lady, in her turn doomed to structures of stone and brick, furnaces, Brussels carpets and pianos, be-stayed figures, stilt-heeled shoes, and iron-crimped hair. In conformity to this high estate it was a frequent habit with mothers to boast that their daughters "never had had their hands in dish-water." The story of the thoughtful girl who so loved her mother that she made a constant practice of playing "Home, sweet home," to her on the piano while she cleansed the family linen was veriest truth, so true that the practice prevails in many homes I know to-day.

The poor "lady," lacking blood, birth, tradition and training, did not know how poor she was, and so kept religiously to the limit set for her. She might dance, ride, or "sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam"; if she had weeded a garden, scrubbed a floor, tramped a highway, or cast a bait until the sun burned her face, she would have been for ever disqualified. In fact, she could not have bended to the weeding, or walked on earth with her shoes, while she would have shrieked at a caterpillar as her grandmother never had dreamed of doing at a bear; and died heroically before she would have impaired her complexion. This revolt against the forest resulted in delicate women, narrowed minds, puny children, extravagant living, not of course in total, but in such alarming proportion as to require combat, lest it weaken the entire fibre and morale of the nation.

Just here I arrived, equipped, from a toddler, in woodlore, schooled from birth to outdoor life by a father who clung tenaciously to inherited British traditions, and forced them upon his children. When I was twenty years of age I and a daughter of Carter Harrison, Sr., of Chicago, were the only two women of a big northern summer resort who could row a boat. One other would search the forest for orchids if accompanied by a man, the remainder kept to the verandah or lawn and read or embroidered while their men folk hunted and fished, and every one played cards or danced at night. I was considered an outcast and half-demented because I fished in the rain one night when I might have attended a ball. One woman blasted me with scorn when I had the hardihood to offer to her a timothy straw strung with luscious big, wild red raspberries; but her husband begged for and ate them with much relish.

For many reasons I came in time to believe that there might be a lifework for one woman in leading these other women back to the forest, and on account of my inclinations, education and rearing I felt in a degree equipped to be their Moses. There was no need for many of them to wrest a living from it, they from the

Gene Stratton-Porter
at the age of sixteen.

work of three generations were frequently prepared to spend a fortune upon it; but in the course of accumulating that fortune, the forest had receded until it was sometimes difficult to find, while wild life had been wantonly sacrificed until deer were scarce, buffalo and wood pigeons exterminated, and many other birds rare.

So the task I set myself was to lead every human being I could influence afield; but with such reverence instilled into their touch that devastation would not be ultimately complete. After a few years spent in finding myself, I began my first book. I had picked a scrap of red from the highway, which proved to be the body of a cardinal grosbeak, an all the year resident with us, a bird that flits and flames during summer and cuts the winter whiteness with his brilliant colour and penetrant whistle, a feeder on wild seeds and insects, a blessing, a sight and sound to rejoice in, yet it had been used for a target, shot merely to prove to some man that his aim was true.

It appealed to me that the high crime of civilisation was the taking of human life. From years of work around the nests of these birds in field photography I knew how their courting, mating, building, brooding and feeding paralleled human life processes; so I outlined "The Song of the Cardinal," with that little bleeding body before me; deliberately, purposely instilling human likeness wherever possible, to the last degree consistent with life processes among the wild. I have been accused of carrying this too far, but that becomes a question of whether I—who lived with these birds until I was able to bring from the forest the set of illustrations that book contains, the most complete and intimate pictorial life history of a pair of birds I have ever seen—know best, or whether my critics are better informed concerning the woods and the wild. I will stand by the natural history of that book as true to the lives of these birds as my illustrations prove they lived it.

I was fearful that in my effort to make the story of the lives of these birds human to a degree that would serve as a protection to them, I *would* incur this criticism, so I wrote to Mr. John Burroughs, our premier natural historian, explaining the plan and purpose of the book and asking his opinion. His reply is one of my cherished possessions. He wrote: "I should not bother myself about what the critics say. They must say something, and they are pretty sure to say many foolish things. A story is not to be tried in the same court as a work on natural history." So I published the book as I thought best for the protection of the birds; but prominent on the title page of each of the ten different bindings in which it has been issued is the announcement that it is a story.

It never has been exploited as a work on natural history. It is now in the hands of the public in a British shilling edition, and from that it ranges up through buckram and half-tone, to leather with water colours, and so on to morocco de luxe. Probably more copies of it have been sold than of any bird story ever published. It has been adopted by State reading societies, put into public and private libraries, used as a text book in schools and colleges, delivered thousands of times in parts from public platforms, and was being translated into French when the war intervened. It has been published in London and sold around the English reading world. It has had the unqualified approval of all our organisations for bird protection and been indorsed by our greatest natural historians and many of our most learned men. Concerning it, Dr. Oren Root, Dean of Mathematics of Hamilton College, an utter stranger to myself, wrote what Mr. Robert Cochrane of the staff of *Chambers' Journal* pronounces: "The most scholarly and informing book review I ever have read." No book published in this country ever had more charming and commendatory criticism. Out of hundreds there were not half a dozen containing any adverse comment. One nature lover of Indianapolis came into print with the statement that

Charles Darwin Porter,
Husband of Gene Stratton-Porter. He began life as a chemist, and later founded the Bank of which he is now president.

cardinals "were strictly seed eaters." As the one lure effective above all others in coaxing this pair of birds into focus, before cameras hidden in blinds, had been bright red scraped beefsteak, this was amusing. He afterwards apologised—to me, not to the public to whom he made the statement. A critic with an array of alphabetic symbols of collegiate degrees following his name, in a San Francisco paper, objected to Abram. There were no farmers like him. A farmer was a clod, like the soil he tilled. I wrote him a brief note citing John Muir, Enos Mills, David Thoreau, John Burroughs, and many others of our most loved field workers, and he subsided. Two or three thought the human comparison carried too far; but I felt and yet feel that the person familiar enough with the birds to write that book and secure its illustrations may be the best judge on that point.

I am sure anyone will grant that if I had the wit to write any kind of a book and secure its publication by our leading publisher, I must have known that a story

based on human love would stand ten times the chance of bringing me an audience and a living that a bird story would, yet I elected to make my initial appearance with this book, because I was a born nature worker and the cause the "Cardinal" champions is nearer to my heart than fame or financial returns. The book started so slowly that soon I came to the realisation that if I could not reach people faster, so far as my work was concerned, the cardinals might all go as had the pigeons. So I tried another book of woodlore, straight nature stuff, through which I ran a slight romance as a sugar coating, in my effort to entice the housebound afield. I named it "The Falling Feather," and it ended where the tree fell and crushed "Freckles." So published, I always have felt sure that it would have won me a place on the shelf where the classics are kept; but the year had seen the publication of "The Three Feathers," "The White Feather," and "The Little White Bird," so all publishers were dubious about another book with birds and feathers in the title, and for economic reasons no one touched a nature book then with the assurance they do now. My problem resolved itself to this: three of our best houses would publish my book if I would change my title, and add the conventional happy ending.

I walked the floor two days and a night before I gave in, and I wish now that I had not; but at the time I thought I was forced, and I rather think so still. I had no audience and no funds to publish and exploit my own work. If I would not conform sufficiently to the judgment of the publishers so that they would bring out my books I could reach the people with no part of my message, and a lifetime of work spent in equipping myself for the work I was eager to do would be wasted to all save myself. The true flavour of the book was spoiled for me; but many have liked it as it stands, and there is a possibility that it will still reach the coveted shelf, even with its handicap. It, of necessity, started slowly, then began a steady process of passing from hand to hand that soon made itself felt, and gradually it gathered its audience and began taking them afield, exactly as I had designed. Each publisher who saw it before production assured me that the nature stuff it contained would kill any chance it might have otherwise of becoming a popular book, and felt sure that if I would cut that out, it would bring me fame and money. I replied that

Jeanette Porter Munro,
Gene Stratton-Porter's only child. She was the original of the Swamp Angel in "Freckles." Mrs. Porter's pet name for her has always been "Molly-Cotton."

the sole purpose of the book was to put the nature stuff it contained before the people, I had no desire for fame, or more than a very plain living; if I changed the title and amplified the text that was all the concession I could possibly make. The result stands a piece of unique history in the book world, where it has fairly well run the gamut of honours that can be paid a book, its last achievement being that of an edition in Braille point for the blind of the National Lending Society, under the management of the Duchess of Argyll and Princess Patricia. I still mourn for my little classic that might have been.

With the circulation of "Freckles" beginning to grow, instead of writing another story, I again proved my devotion to field work by spending my time, strength and the returns from the two books on the market, on a third, "What I Have Done With Birds." Following that I wrote "At the Foot of the Rainbow," a hunting and fishing story I had been asked for by the editor of *Outing*, at that time our leading sportsman's magazine, on the staff of which I had done nature work for several years. In this I might revel in nature as I pleased. It had the highest grade of commendatory criticism of any book I ever have written, and if what I have done is ever arranged according to true literary value, based on fidelity to nature and human nature, it will go up head.

Then I began assembling material I had been collecting for years for a book on the "Birds of the Bible," and the same year published another nature story, "A Girl of the Limberlost." At this point I entered into an agreement with my publisher to

Gene Stratton-Porter
and her husband, daughter and grandchildren, on the walk to the dock at Limberlost Cabin.

alternate work. One year I would write a nature story, for which my audience had now grown to paying proportions, the next I would write any kind of a nature book I chose, brought out as I designed it. So "Music of the Wild" followed, then a story, "The Harvester," then "Moths of the Limberlost," then another story, "Laddie," after which I broke the routine myself by spending two years in building a new cabin at the head of the swamp region of my State, as my working territory below had been devastated by lumbermen, oilmen and farmers until nothing from which to make a picture was left. The beginning of this destruction was foretold in "Freckles," almost consummated by the time "A Girl of the Limberlost" was written, and quite, on the the appearance of my moth book, On account of moving farther north, I had no illustration ready for a nature book, but I did have a story, so we published "Michael O'Halloran," and I am now working on my next nature book which will be a revision and amplification of "What I Have Done With Birds," as I have withdrawn that book from the market until I can put it in shape more satisfactory to me.

All these books are now published in London with one exception, "Birds of 'he Bible." Recently I revised "The Song of the Cardinal," and "Freckles," and they now stand in the form I am willing to leave them. Following this I shall take each book in turn and put it into permanent form. In presenting to the British reading public these eleven books at one time, by a writer comparatively new to you, I should be glad if I could make clear my veiwpoint concerning them, and secure for them a reading from the standpoint from which they were conceived and produced. This may not be in my power, but I find great joy in making the effort.

The "Song of the Cardinal," is a bird's romance as I watched it develop while hidden in blinds making the illustration of the book, which tells the most beautiful and convincing half of the story. The remainder of the nature books are absolutely true to the location in which they were written as to scientific values, as good literature as is in my power to write, and illustrated with perfect fidelity.

Limberlost Cabin,
The home of Gene Stratton-Porter, showing her library window.

The nature stories are the slenderest possible threads of romance on which I have strung every gem from nature their strength will bear. That the natural history of these books is true to my working grounds in northern Indiana, I will guarantee. The characters are men and women I have known intimately enough for faithful portrayal; in one instance, "Laddie," homefolk; and a few composites of the good in a dozen people rolled into one character of pure idealism, as "The Harvester," or "Michael O'Halloran," although each had his original, and the book presentment did not overdraw so very much. *I elect to write only of moral men and women who work for the betterment of the world. My characters portray life as it is lived in homes of refinement and culture, where each man and woman does his level best. They represent life as it is lived in many homes all of us know, and as it might be lived in all homes, if men and women would live up to the "mark of their high calling"; do their best instead of their worst.* To deny that the world contains the simple, kindly, moral folk such as I put into books is insanity; all of us are acquainted with the gentle, kindly, courteous men and women I describe. That their life picture is a true picture of all life, I never intended anyone to think, and I seriously doubt if anyone ever did. I know the folly, the fraud, the intrigue, the immorality of life. The daily papers reach even Wildflower Woods; sometimes I wish they did not, and sometimes I read the big books of realism written with tears tinctured with blood and shame. I know their strength and truth to life. What I do not know is whether they accomplish any great work for the betterment of the world; while in their second- and third-rate form of immediate discourse of lust, fraud and snobbishness, I do know that they are a horrible source of corruption and evil. I will not grant that such books, either in their best or worst form are any *truer pictures of life in its entirety*, than are my own. All of life is not lived in cities. The country, even the woods has its population these days. All men and women do not fall. There is an inborn refinement in some too deep for low forms of sin, and a fibre in others too stern to stoop to it.

A thing utterly baffling to me is why the life history of the sins and shortcomings of a man should constitute a book of *realism*, and the life history of a just and incorruptible man should constitute a book of *idealism*. Is not a moral man as *real* as an immoral one? Is not the struggle of a man to keep clean as noteworthy and heroic as that of a man to come back after he has fallen? To me, given two men of equal physical strength and brain capacity, present them with the same temptation—to me the man who stands must always and for ever be a *bigger man* than the one who falls; the man most worthy, from every point of view the real man. Surely the history of a strong man is better to put into the hands of a boy than the detailed self-indulgence of a weak one. I count any boy safer with "The Harvester" in his fingers than with "The Picture of Dorian Gray."

I never wanted my stories called novels. I never tried to make them more, or other than I have described. I never hoped for them in their modest beginning to reach more than a few nature lovers or those so constituted there was hope of transformation. Recently a man from the far South sent me a poem of Le Gallienne's beginning

" Oh take away these books that tell
The hideous so-called truth of things,
These little documents of hell—
Bring us the book that dreams and sings
And whispers ' All is well ! ' "

He wrote that it was the most perfect review of my books he ever had read.

Photo by Gene Stratton-Porter. **The rarest Moth of North America.**

The one fact that my critics purposely ignore, or do not know, is that the audience for my books is a *personal thing*, built up by the books themselves. The men and women who run a book of mine to a large edition are a band of home-loving, home-keeping people, striving to make something of life better for themselves and their children than café living with tangoing between courses. Inquiries extending over ten years, made from numerous book dealers, prove that my audience is *not the same people* who read and make popular many other books. My work was deliberately planned and written as it is in the growing and continued belief that it would carry more people afield than the writings of the combined scientists of the world. On the turf, in the sunshine, under the blue dome is a precious good place to be; while that my work helps men and women, boys and girls by the thousand from Nome, Alaska to Stellenbosch, South Africa, my mail bag each day bears eloquent testimony.

"Come Here! Come Here!" entreated the Cardinal.

Reduced reproduction of one of Mrs. Porter's water-colour illustrations from a new and revised edition of "The Song of the Cardinal."

No one could have been more surprised than I when these simple efforts to depict wholesome homing in outdoor environs began to creep toward large popular favour. I was glad to have the message they bore carried widely, I was dismayed at the inevitable comparison into which they would be forced. They were intended for truth, not fiction; they had no plot, they were anchored in the only location I knew well enough to describe faithfully; but like Mr. Finney's turnip, "they grew and they grew," until it really seemed they could "grow no longer," and now the poor critic who attempts to conform them to the conventional fictional standard is having a sad time, and I am having a sadder. I am sorry for some of my critics who are wasting ink on criticisms so far from the point, and the truth.

There is the woman who recently brushed aside in contempt all the work I have done as unworthy of any consideration, because it was designed and executed by me *solely to make money*. Fancy writing and making photographic illustrations for five nature books as a financial proposition! Think of tramping the woods for years lugging heavy cameras, making thousands of natural history reproductions as a money-making venture, or dawdling hours over painting a moth wing with a brush trimmed to three hairs! And will this woman tell me why, when my nature stories had grown to a point where they became a financial consideration, if I were working for money, I did not drop the nature books, and write three stories in the time consumed in making one natural history volume? When I showed this criticism to my publisher he groaned. He groaned in body and spirit over uncounted thousands he had lost, because I would not consent to serials, even when he offered as high as $20,000 for one, or allowed me to set my own price. He groaned over countless refusals to have my work dragged through dramatisations, and moving pictures, and many other money-making schemes. At the present minute, when my latest book has run to a sale of over 300,000 copies in three months, the mercenary creature that I am is calmly revising a bird book, slopping in the dark room preparing half-tone illustrations, and painting

water-colour studies for it, instead of writing several more stories, as I easily could do. Surely my course and the nature books I issue do prove me a grasping, mercenary creature!

One recent critic wrote that I "sat in a modern mansion, writing pleasing platitudes." I live three miles from a railroad station, in a log cabin, in primal woods, in the very simplest way possible consistent with leaving me free to devote my time to my books; and very frequently I am forced into the kitchen to attend to the needs of my family in person. I am making a frantic effort to establish in my woods each species of our native wild flowers that will endure my climate, before the swamps are drained and the rarest exterminated, as many are very nearly extinct now. The night I read that criticism I was dressed in a suit of green khaki blouse, bloomers and rubber boots, similar to the one worn in the swamp picture among the illustrations to this article, and it, or one like it, had constituted my wearing apparel for three months, during which time I had brought in with my car, and set for the most part with my own fingers, the roots of over 5,000 trees, shrubs, vines, flowers and ferns. I was sunburned, scratched and that day blistered with sumac poison which put me to bed with chills and eyes swollen shut for two days, and the torture endured for a month, because so soon as I was a little better I persisted in going on with my work of collecting wild flowers, and so reinfected myself. At the present minute my ears, hands and arms are still discoloured from the burns. But when in the Spring its owner drains that swamp, most of its orchids will have their toes safely tucked in the moss of my bog garden. The comment I made to my family when I read that was to stretch out my scratched and blistered hands and ask: "What *would* the man who wrote that say, if he could see me now?"

His criticism contained as much truth, and came quite as close to the point as do many of them, for which reason I am writing these lines. I might add that I never have kept any record of what I have earned with my books. Beyond trying to lay aside enough for the plainest kind of living, what I earn is educating a fine band of boys and girls, paying indebtednesses I never incurred, lifting mortgages, and doing what is in my power to make my friends comfortable and happy.

Nothing could better prove my contention that some of my critics shoot their bolts wide of the mark, than a recent effort by a man who does not deserve the prominence the mention of his name would give him. He attempts in the beginning to bolster his article by the ambiguous statement that "serious critical opinion is fairly well agreed on the merits of the work," done by me. This would seem to indicate that he desires his criticism to be taken "seriously" and I will so take it. His first statement to which I "seriously" object is that "the scientific value of her labours is largely discounted by the open and unabashed self-satisfaction of her style"; which proves that my critic had not read my books, for I was not writing about myself, but the miracles of natural evolution with which I admit I am amply satisfied, for I believe with Whitman that "a mouse is miracle enough to stagger a sectillion infidels."

This critic classes "The Song of the Cardinal" as fiction, and then immediately turns and attacks it as "nature-faking." He says I "constantly allowed her imagination to translate the actions of the birds into human emotions," which I grant; not "unconsciously," as he takes the liberty to assert, but deliberately and to the last degree permissible. That my critic feels I carried this too far can be seen from his statement: "At times her imagery is unconsciously grotesque, as when she tells us that the female bird 'blushed with embarrassment to a colour even brighter than her natural red.'" "Grotesque," I will concede, if it were a true quotation; but the "faking" applies to my critic, not to my work. William Sharp wrote that the work of a critic was a thing rare and fine: "the marriage of science which knows, and of spirit that discerns."

Now if my critic had been possessed of "the science which knows," he would have known that a hen cardinal is grey; and had he been endowed with even a glimmering of "the spirit that discerns," he would have seen that the poorest naturalist alive would not have attributed a "blush," to a feathered creature. Not in "The Song of the Cardinal," or in any line I ever wrote, can any one find the statement by me that any feathered or furred creature "blushed with embarrassment." If "serious critical opinion is agreed" concerning me, where does it stand concerning a critic who will pronounce the work of a nature writer "grotesque" and "faking," and then himself fakes an entire quotation in an attempt to prove his point?

He goes on to state that I have "a single talent of rather limited range." And here I had been thinking that when I went afield and brought in the first-hand material for five nature books, illustrated them with half-tone from life, and water-colour paintings; wrote stories containing thousands of natural history references none of which have as yet been authoritatively contradicted, designed my covers and front matter, and furnished the bird work for the New International Standard Biblical Encyclopædia, that I was doing several things well enough for some of the world's best editors to accept them.

He writes that my "plot sense has remained in a rudimentary state." This cuts me out of all volition in the matter of writing my books. It makes my work what I *can* do, *not* what I *design and deliberately plan to do.* I am not wholly devoid of conception and imagination. I could weave an intricate plot of rankest realism, an I chose; I merely decline to set my name to work of that sort, and stick to the thing I set out to do in the beginning. Again, had he been possessed of "the spirit that discerns," he would have seen that he broke every canon of the true critic's art when he pronounced "The Girl of the Limberlost" the poorest work I had done, and then selected it for review, in an article devoted to setting me in my proper literary place.

Had he been writing of the work of either of two men of my State, will anyone believe that he would have passed over "A Hoosier Chronicle," and "The Poet," and made an estimate of the literary values of Nicholson based on a former indiscretion, "The Siege of Seven Suitors?" Or would he have ignored "Beaucaire" and "The Turmoil," and judged Tarkington by "Cherry" or "The Two Van Revels?"

Now for the *justice* of his review of this book. He champions realism, yet he disavows that any mother

would treat her daughter in the manner described, for the reasons adduced. I was familiar with the Comstock incident, under another name, and will vouch for it. When we read this review my daughter and I sat down and counted up six instances we could recall among our immediate acquaintances, where parents and children were farther estranged than this book recounts, for much less reason. At this instant among my girl acquaintances there is one whose father treated her with such vindictive cruelty for years, merely because she was not a son. She so craved his love and appreciation that she took a course of training in his profession, and when she proved that she understood and could be of great assistance to him in his business, she won him completely, and now she is the subject of prideful boasting on his part, not in melodrama, but in my nearest city.

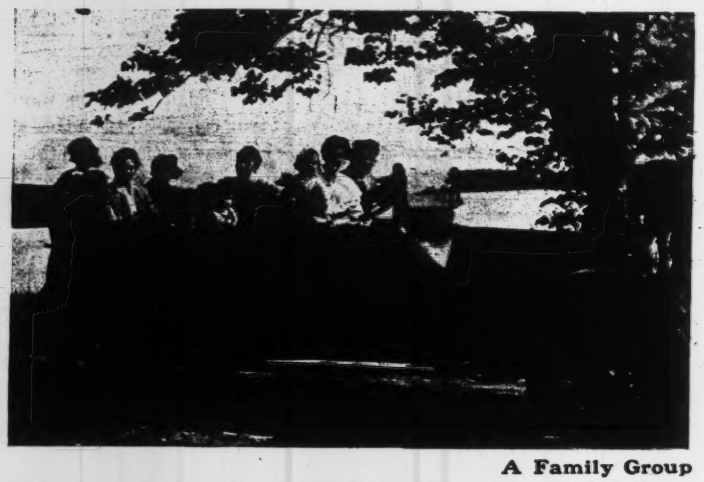
Of "A Girl of the Limberlost," this critic makes the statement that no fairy god-mother appeared on the scene yet "penniless and without friends she accomplishes a miracle of clothing and educating herself." To anyone who has read the book this is even a more flagrant breach of the ethics of true criticism, than that of making up a quotation to suit his convenience. To those who have not, I will explain that the first chapter introduces a man who had loved and fended for the "Girl" all her life, the second brings in the man's wife who buys and makes the clothing the girl needs; at almost the same time appears a professor who helps her to books; and shortly after she comes into contact with the "Bird Woman," which is where I come in; while throughout the book almost each day brings her some new helper, just as life brings such a girl as I described the thing she bravely and persistently sets out to win. Further, the "miracle of clothing" was some country made gingham dresses, and of "education," graduation in a small town high school.

Gene Stratton-Porter

collecting pitcher plants and orchids for her bog garden at Wildflower Woods, surrounding Limberlost Cabin. In field work Mrs. Porter wears a suit of green khaki and binds her head in blood red chiffon after the custom of the Indians as a precaution against hunters.

The next accusation against me by this critic is that I "see life through convex mirrors and distorted lenses"; which leads me to the strictly feminine comment that this is exactly the way he sees my books. He calls me a "nature faker," then himself fakes a quotation to prove it; which leaves my natural history of a brand acceptable to the doctors of science compiling the Encyclopædia I mentioned—and they had the ornithologists of the world from whom to make a choice to do the work. As for my stories, they do not contain what I know to be true of all life, but what I do know to be true of a much larger part of life than any critic I have ever known will admit. It is exactly what could be true of all life if all men would put up the fight for clean morals that "The Harvester" did. Fifty years of such life on the part of every man would empty our feeble-minded homes, almshouses, and prisons, and, barring accidents, would practically do away with hospitals and sanatoriums. This is no Utopian dream: ask any responsible physician.

To the charge that I am over sentimental—perhaps! I prefer too much rather than too little; and there is more in the world than any of us will admit, while it is



A Family Group

On front seat: Mrs. Porter, her name-sake Gene, and her son-in-law, Mr. G. B. Monroe. Middle seat: Her daughter, Mrs. Munroe, and her daughter's Jeanette. Back seat: A little neighbour, with Miss Mary Grimes and Roberta Murray.

rampant among my kind of people. I believe in love, in kindness, in morality, in lending a helping hand in this world. All the religion I profess, practice, or put into a book is "All things whatsoever——" Just how a combination of accurate wood lore, this precept, and sentiment, should result in a harmful book I cannot imagine, yet another of my critics this side says "only the meanest man alive" will read my latest book, and one of yours that it is "horrible!"

If this "horror" lies in the case of the nurse abusing her charge, it happened in Central Park, New York, and I can produce the woman who saw it, followed to the residence and told the mother, with exactly the results described in the book. That there are dreadful women caring for little children in homes all over the world cannot be disputed. That mothers are more and more turning over the care of their children to nurses and devoting themselves to society, civic improvement, clubs and politics, no one will deny. I knew this incident was "horrible," but I also knew it was true. I used it in the hope that just one mother would be brought to realise what might be happening to her children at the hands of Employment Agency nurses, while she danced or improved the world.

Several critics said "Mickey," would not have taken care of the little sick girl. They did not know Mickey. He was a New York newsboy, his environment was in a big central State city; but in the slums of any city no sight is more familiar than that of the boys and girls caring for younger children, while the parents are at work. Some of this is cruel, careless care; but much of it is also protective, loving care, as I know by personal investigation.

Lastly, one bewildered critic vents his displeasure in a cry that rises above the "paper he eats and the ink he drinks," if I may quote Nathaniel, in the impatient exclamation "Why all this beauty!" concerning the make-up of my books. It is because I live in a wonderland; in a county said to have three hundred lakes, over one hundred of which are large enough to be named and charted. The highways wind between and around these, through hundreds of acres of primal swamp and marshland, and quite a bit of original forest. Here is the natural home of every bird, flower, moth and butterfly native to our climate and country. Here in two seasons I have found almost every flower listed in our botanies, and some that are not. In Wildflower Woods, surrounding Limberlost Cabin, I have in the past two seasons set, mostly with my own fingers, the roots of over ten thousand wild trees, flowers and ferns. I have trailing arbutus, starry champion, cardinal flower, purple gerardia and painters' cup, grow fringed gentians from seed, and in my bog garden are twenty of our rarest orchids, including whorled pogonia, golden slippers, mocassins, showy orchids and showy slippers. Among these, and my trees, I live and work, almost never going into the world. Daily I see and handle the rarest flowers, moths and birds native with us, feed them, photograph them, and paint them in water colours. I live in a world of light, fragrance, beauty and song. No wonder it overflows in my books.

I put the birds into "Freckles," the moths into "A Girl of the Limberlost," the flowers and herbs into "The Harvester," and the tamarack swamp into "Michael O'Halloran." As I work on each of these books, weaving my little romance in these beauty spots I love, scenes, colour schemes and flower faces are sub-consciously impressed on my mind, so when I finish the text, with it there goes to my publisher a cover design, a colour scheme, and sketches for front matter. I am responsible for the "beauty" in my home editions; and the reason "why" is that "beauty is its own excuse for being."

These are all the criticisms against my work worthy of note that I can think of, and some of these are scarcely

Photo by Gene Stratton-Porter.

"Freckles'" Little Chicken in the monster hollow tree in the Limberlost.

that; against them I can measure more commendatory criticism than any writer among us has had in the length of time I have been writing; and because I have this background at home, so far I have made no word of reply or explanation to anything anyone has elected to write of me. In coming before a new audience, and presenting eleven books at one time, with no volition as to which shall be first read, and being personally unknown, it is no more than fair to me, to my publishers, and to my audience, that I explain and acquaint myself with you as far as possible; certainly it is not unfair to my critics, of some of whom I am very fond.

My veins run more than half British blood, the remainder Dutch, and as I feel at home in England, naturally I desire to be judged fairly, on the basis of all the work I have done, and the results it has accomplished in going unheralded around the world, in being translated into four foreign tongues, and in sending more of our people out of doors than all other causes combined, as is now generally conceded in the western and middle States.

Photo by Gene Stratton-Porter.

THEODORE WATTS-DUNTON.

TWO SIDES OF HIS MANY-SIDEDNESS.

THE one thing of all others upon which Watts-Dunton set store was good fellowship. Admittedly one of the foremost critics of his time, and by some high authorities accounted one of the greatest critics of any time, a man to whom criticism was second nature, he accounted good fellowship as of greater worth even than genius. If ever he went critically astray, if ever intellectually he over-rated his man, it was because he allowed his heart to outride his head. Once convince him that this or that young writer was a good fellow, and born critic though he was, even criticism went by the board in Watts-Dunton's intellectual estimate of him. If I illustrate this by a personal experience it is not to speak of myself, but because though I have personal knowledge of many similar instances, in this instance I have the "documents" in the case before me. It concerns the circumstances by which I first came to know Watts-Dunton.

In the New Year of 1885 there appeared the first number of a weekly (afterwards a monthly) magazine with the somewhat infelicitous if not feeble title of *Home Chimes*. It was edited and owned by F. W. Robinson, then a popular novelist. To the first number Swinburne and Theodore Watts contributed poems, and in that now dead and forgotten venture the early work of many men and women who thereafter became famous is to be found. For instance, Jerome K. Jerome's "Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow," as well as his "Three Men and a Boat," first saw the light there. There much of Sir J. M. Barrie's early work appeared, for I once heard the author of "A Window in Thrums" say, though I do not suppose he meant to be taken too seriously, that there was a time when to him "London" meant the place where *Home Chimes* was published. There, early work by Eden Phillpotts, Israel Zangwill, G. B. Burgin, and a host of others who have since "come into their own" was printed, and there I may say incidentally part of my own first little book appeared.

"Yes" Robinson once said to me reminiscently, "It is true that Jerome, Barrie, Phillpotts, Zangwill, Burgin, and yourself all more or less 'came out' in *Home Chimes*, but I have my doubts sometimes whether the whole of you ever raised the sale of the magazine by so much as a number."

"On the contrary," I replied, "my own opinion is that some of us killed it."

Be that as it may, Robinson lost heavily upon *Home Chimes*, and was hit even harder by the death of the "three-decker"—I mean by the ousting of novels in three volumes at thirty shillings, in favour of novels in one volume at six shillings. The change indeed caused such a drop in his income that he decided to look about him for another means of livelihood, outside literature, and when, soon after, an Inspectorship of H.M. Prisons became vacant, he applied for the appointment. For this he had special qualifications as he had for years closely and critically studied our Prison System and had, in fact, written and published much upon the subject. Knowing how eager he was for pecuniary reasons to secure the appointment, and being anxious to do what I could to assist his candidature (I plead guilty to 'log-rolling' in this most justifiable instance) I asked the late Mr. Passmore Edwards, proprietor and editor of the *Echo*, the only halfpenny evening paper in those days, to let me write a sketch of Robinson in the "*Echo* Portrait Gallery" to which I was a contributor. In this sketch — it was signed "C. K." merely — I touched (purposely) upon Robinson's close study and special

knowledge of the workings and defects of our Prison System. My article was seen by Theodore Watts who wrote Robinson a letter which the latter sent on to me. It was as follows:

> "MY DEAR ROBINSON,—I have been delighted by a notice of you in the *Echo* which I am told is by Coulson Kernahan. That must be a charming fellow who wrote it, why don't you collect your loyal supporters around you (there are only two of us, Kernahan and Watts) over a little dinner at your Club,
>
> "Yours ever,
> "THEODORE WATTS."

"Robinson, if you had not been the most modest and delicate-minded man in contemporary literature, you would have trebled your fame and trebled your income. That is what 'C. K.' says of you, but I have said it for a quarter of a century."

This was the beginning of my long friendship with Watts-Dunton, and I enter thus fully into a merely trivial and personal matter for the reason that the letter I have quoted is very characteristic of the writer. "Good fellowship" was, I repeat, the first article in Watts-Dunton's creed. His very religion was based upon it. He said once to me that were it not that some good men and women would see irreverence where he meant none and of which he was by temperament and by his very sense of wonder incapable, he should like to write an article "The Goodfellowship of God," taking as his text the lines of Omar Khayyám, in which the old tent-maker speaks of "those who picture a 'surly' God:

> "And daub His Visage with the Smoke of Hell;
> They talk of some strict testing of us—Pish!
> He's a Good Fellow and 'twill all be well."

"To word it thus may sound profanely to some ears," commented Watts-Dunton, "but old Khayyám was only trying to express in his pagan way—though I suspect there is as much of FitzGerald as of Omar in the rendering—his belief in the loving Fatherhood of God which is held by every Christian. In fact 'good fellowship' stands to Shakespeare's 'cakes-and-ale'-loving, and jolly fraternity, for the 'Human Brotherhood' of which the stricter church and chapel-going folk speak, and I suspect that there is sometimes less acrimony and a broader human outlook over cakes and ale in an inn than there is over urn-stewed tea, bread-and-butter and buns in some of the church or chapel tea-meetings that went on when I was a boy."

My article about Robinson was merely an attempt to set out his qualifications for the post of Inspector of Prisons. Those qualifications were many and my space was limited. Hence the article was as dull and stodgy a recital of facts as ever was written. There was as much in it from which to infer that the writer was a "charming fellow" as there is in a rice pudding by which to prove that the cook can sing divinely. But Robinson was a "good fellow." My article among other things made that at least clear. According to the gospel of good fellowship, as held by Watts-Dunton, a good fellow could be appreciated only by a good fellow, just as he once wrote to me, "My theory always is that a winsome style in prose comes from a man whose heart is good." I had shown appreciation of his friend; and, partisan and hero of friendship that he was, he was willing to take the rest on trust. Rightly to appreciate his friend was to win Watts-Dunton's heart at the start.

One sometimes hears or sees it stated that Watts-Dunton was indifferent alike to literary fame and to criticism, adverse or favourable. No one who knew him other than very slightly could think this. Watts-Dunton was, in scriptural phrase, "a man in whom was no guile." He was transparently ingenuous of thought and purpose and did not attempt to conceal his gratification at the success of "Aylwin," or the pleasure which a discriminating and sympathetic appreciation afforded him. This only added to the respect and affection of his friends. It would have wounded us to think that the man we bore intellectually in such profound reverence, personally in such deep affection, could play the poseur and affect to despise the deserved success and recognition which his work had won. W. E. Henley is said to have thanked God that he had "never suffered the indignity of a popular success." Henley deserved success, popular or otherwise, if ever writer did, for he never stooped to do less than his best, nor sought to achieve by shoddy means the success which, thus attained, is indeed to be despised. But a success deservedly won, even if a so-called popular success, every writer in his heart desires. To pretend otherwise is mere insincerity. It is not "playing the game," for even the pursuit of letters is none the worse, for a touch of the English sporting spirit. It is indeed the chief reproach of those of us who follow the craft of letters that we are "artists" rather than sportsmen. Englishmen fight the better and write the better, for seeing alike in writing and in fighting something of a "game." Literature is a race in which every competitor hopes, and rightly, to come in first. If he be fairly beaten on his merits, he will admit and ungrudgingly, if a sportsman as well as a writer, that the better man has won. This does not mean he is content tamely to sit down under defeat. It means, on the contrary, harder work and severer training so that on other occasions, by redoubling his exertions, himself may be the man who wins on his merits. And if he fail again and yet again, instead of sneering at the prize as worthless, he will, if he ever heard it, recall the story of the two artists. A very young painter, who afterwards became great, stood in his obscure and struggling days, when no one had heard his name or would look at his pictures, before the greatest canvas of the greatest painter of the time. The grandeur of the work, alike in conception and in execution, staggered him. Possibly there was despair at his heart, as he asked himself how could he, too poor for proper opportunity of study, too poor even to afford a model or to buy oils, ever hope to emulate such a masterpiece as this? But at least there was at his heart no meanness, and envy; no disposition to belittle or to grudge the other his high place. Throwing back his head, with flashing eyes and a throb in his voice he exclaimed proudly, radiantly, "And I, too, am an artist!"

But when Henley who strained and strained splendidly to carry off the first prize—and missed—belittles its value, and would have us to believe that he is better pleased to carry off "the last event"—the "Consolation

Prize" of "never having suffered the indignity of a popular success," we distrust his sportsmanship and his sincerity. Watts-Dunton never posed after that manner. He was glad of his success and proud of it. It was because success instead of increasing his literary stature in his own eyes, as not infrequently happens, only made him increasingly modest and diffident that he was sometimes supposed to care nothing for his literary laurels. In one respect his success was something of a disappointment to him, not so much because it illustrated the truth of Goethe's saying—nearer seventy than sixty as Watts-Dunton was when he achieved that success—"the wished-for come too late," but because it was not the success he expected and to which he believed himself most to be entitled.

Mr. Douglas calls his book on Watts-Dunton "Theodore Watts-Dunton, Poet, Novelist and Critic," and the description and the order in which those descriptions appear were of Watts-Dunton's own choosing. It was first as a poet, secondly as a novelist, and only thirdly, if at all, as a critic that he wished and hoped to be remembered. Those who hold the balance of values in letters seem at the present moment inclined to reverse that order and to place the critic first and the poet last. My own opinion is that a hundred years hence it will be by the inclusion of certain of his poems, especially his Nature poems, in the anthologies, that Watts-Dunton will most be known to the general reader; but be that as it may, the fact remains that his success as a novelist rather than as a poet, came as something of a disappointment as well as a surprise.

Watts-Dunton was—I would emphasise this point strongly—an amateur in letters to the last, never the professional "literary man." It is because he was by temperament the amateur, not the professional, that he took his success so seriously and did not conceal a certain almost child-like gratification (which was not vanity) that it afforded him. Your shrewd professional writer would have spent less time in contemplation of his success, and more in seeking how best to exploit and advertise that success to his professional advantage.

Watts-Dunton, on the contrary, took the success of "Aylwin" very much as a young mother takes her firstling. He dandled it, toyed with it, hugged it, not altogether without something of the wonder and awe with which the fond mother regards her child. An amateur as I say and to the last, he could hardly believe his own ears, his own eyes, at finding that his work had a high "market" value and that one publisher was ready to bid against another for his next book Truth to tell he was not a little flustered by it all. "Hostages

The New Limberlost Cabin

surrounded by Wildflower Woods, on the lake shore in Northern Indiana. The wood contains fifteen acres, most of it in primeval forest, and runs from Mucky Lake shore up a high hill, affording localities for every variety of wild flowers. Here in big beds of an acre each Mrs. Porter is collecting all the wild flowers of her State and grouping them according to colour in a unique botanical garden. This cabin is her permanent residence.

to "posterity" of his sort carried responsibilities with them not the least of which was the expectation that he would follow up "Aylwin" with other books. I remember the portentous, almost troubled knitting of his brows when perhaps a little maliciously I hinted that it was no use his bringing out new editions of "Aylwin," or brooding over new prefaces for new editions of the same novel. "What your public and your publishers demand from you," I said, "is 'Aylwin's' successor, not new editions but a new book."

"Ah!" he said with deep meaning (no one could put so much into an "ah" as he)—and figuratively collapsed. For in spite of the innumerable literary projects on which he loved to dwell and to talk over with his friends, he knew well that "Aylwin" was his one novel and was likely to be his last. He had all the amateur's doubt, diffidence and hesitation, none of the professional's cocksureness and business sense; and I say again that if ever there was a man—his half-century and more of association with literature notwithstanding—who was surprised to wake up one morning, as has been said of another poet, to find himself famous, that man was the most truly modest and unassuming man of letters of his time, Theodore Watts-Dunton.

A. E.*

By LAURENCE BINYON.

THERE are few more remarkable men surely among the inhabitants of these islands now living than the poet, painter, mystic, economic and agricultural reformer, who is known to his friends as George Russell and in the world of books as A. E. To begin with a trivial matter, it is odd to note that while Mr. Russell writes "A. E.," Mr. Figgis, who writes about him, makes the two letters into a dipthong. Many must have wondered what the letters meant and surmised a mystical significance. According to Mr. Figgis, the poet chose the name "Æon" to sign an article with, and the printer, boggling at it, deciphered no more than the first syllable, which the poet contentedly accepted. Like W. B. Yeats, Mr. Russell left school to become an art student; and it was at the Dublin School of Art that these two, afterwards to become associated in fame, first met. Mr. Yeats, though he has made occasional pastels that will be treasured later on, deserted painting for poetry. A. E., on the contrary, always cherished his art, and though for periods the painter in him has lain in abeyance, he has, especially in more recent years, painted pictures that have won him a distinguished place. At its best, his painting has a peculiar charm. But as a young man he was destined to walk in other and harder ways. If his spirit needed an astringent, he found it at his desk in the draper's in Dublin where he toiled as a cashier. It was this practical experience which backed Mr. Yeats' recommendation of his friend to Sir Horace Plunkett, who in 1897 was looking for men to help him in his work of regenerating rural Ireland by organising co-operative societies and agricultural banks; and the poet, freed from his mechanic monotony of labour, went forth into the Irish counties on a bicycle, persuading, exhorting, assembling, teaching, organising the tillers of the land. That poets and visionaries are often the most practical of men, is no new discovery; but it has not been given to many poets to be challenged with so great an opportunity. Some may recall the story of Arthur Rimbaud, who was working in the Soudan, the most enthusiastic and tireless of French consuls, while in Paris his youthful poetry was being acclaimed and he himself had become a legend. But Rimbaud had turned his back on poetry, had forgotten it. A. E. has not done that: the poet in him lives and sustains his vision through all the details and disappointments of experience; it is his imagination which gives him both inspiration and grasp, it is the secret of his success.

In his youth this poet turned from the drudgery of the ledger to cultivate the more ardently in his evenings his bent to mysticism. He pondered over the ancient books of wisdom that India has bequeathed to the world; and he gathered about him a company of young followers to whom he taught the secret of contemplation. His poems, all lyrical, are saturated with this cast of thought. It is this mood of rapt contemplation, seeing "the universe in a grain of sand," this passion for the infinite, which gives the poems their beauty of character, rather than any subtle art of words or inspiration of rhythm. Few or none of them have the concentrated strangeness of beauty that is crystallised in the best of Mr. Yeats' songs. A. E. is perhaps too facile to reach that perfected mastery of lyric language; and, maybe, he is of those who think that Mr. Yeats would do his genius better justice by letting it flow more spontaneously, by brooding less anxiously over his endless revisions of his work. Mr. Figgis tells us a remarkable instance of A. E.'s facility. A joint play by Mr. Yeats and Mr. George Moore (worked over with curious labour) was produced in Dublin by Mr. F. R. Benson. This was the "Diarmid and Grania." A. E. went to see it, and "came to the conclusion that if this was drama, then drama was an exceedingly easy thing to do. When he reached home that night he straightway wrote the first act of a play dealing with Deirdre." The brothers Fay, then trying to reform the drama in Dublin, heard of this first act, and persuaded the poet to write two more. "This was very easily done"; and the play was produced. "Deirdre" is included in A. E.'s volume of "Imaginations and Reveries." It is tantalising work; for it seems the mere sketch of something that should have had grandeur and the capacity for creating a world of profound emotion. As Mr. Figgis says, it lacks "some tragic weighting of the tale in the mind of the writer." He goes on to complain that there is not enough of A. E. in the play; the drama, he rather perversely contends, is more personal than the lyric; but certainly in the result what we miss is lack of substance and vitality in the figures of the drama and still more the pressing out of dramatic beauty from

* "Imaginations and Reveries." By A. E.—"Æ." (George W. Russell). By Darrell Figgis. 2s. 6d. net each. (Maunsel).

Gene Stratton-Porter.

circumstances so rich in the possibilities of that beauty. The prose dialogue, too, is inadequate. If the poet had wrestled with his theme, and exhausted his utmost powers in doing so, it would not have been more than the subject demanded. Too great a fluency both here and in the lyrics is A. E.'s weakness.

But to leave Mr. Figgis—to whom we are grateful for such facts as he tells us of Mr. Russell's career, though we could wish that he deigned to use a plainer, a less self-conscious and less wordy style—the volume of collected essays and papers before us will be welcome to many as an expression of A. E.'s gifts at their best. True poet though he is, it may be that A. E. will be remembered longest by his impassioned prose. Many of us remember that memorable piece on the present war, "The Spiritual Conflict," which appeared in *The Times* and is here reprinted. The thought so suggestively here put forth is this, "Material victories are often spiritual defeats." Nations embodying an idea are conquered, but the idea is left behind "as a glory in the air," and is incarnated afresh in the minds of their conquerors. The French idea of a century and more ago, the democratic idea, invaded men's minds everywhere, though France was dominated materially by a Cæsar from within, by allied Europe from without. Will the German idea, that of the State organised to supreme efficiency, conquer our minds, even if Germany be materially overthrown? Whether this suggested prophecy come true or not, how right is A. E. in reminding us that our political ideals are symbols of "spiritual destines!" Above all, he sets us thinking, and not merely thinking in a reverie, but thinking with a light shining before us. That is the constant quality of his writing. In view of that prophetic suggestion about the "German idea," it interests us to note how profoundly A. E. has imbued his mind with the old legends, the old faiths of his race. For though commercial and military efficiency has been the material aspect of Germany's stride to power, behind all that a long brooding on the legendary Teutonic past has fermented in cravings for a fierce nationalism; the old Gods have been waked from their sleep in the twilight, and Odin is invoked afresh. A. E. too is for nationality as against cosmopolitanism; and he has striven to revive into reality the old gods and goddesses and the heroes of Ireland, to make them share again in the life and religious feelings of his countrymen. How much the doctrinaire ferocity of the modern German is inspired by the resurgence of old savage ideals, the dream of Valhalla, working like an incongruous yeast in heavily-thinking brains, deeply vulgarised by commercial successes, would be a speculation interesting to follow up. Here we have but space to note the contrast of A. E.'s thoughts about the old heroic life of his own race. For what to him is the appeal in legendary Ireland is not only the beauty and splendour of passionate lives and deaths, the religion of courage and chivalry, but the nearness of touch with elemental life which breathes from those ancient legends; as, for instance, in the legend of the three great waves of the sea that rose in response to the great deeds of the heroes. This is what the modern mind has lost, with its "withdrawal of thought from nature," and its fatal division of the spiritual from the secular. This is the inspiration which is always at the heart of A. E.'s writing, whether he writes on Irish poets and artists, or "Nationality," or the "Hero in Man," or "Love and Religion." He does not spare the Irish or flatter their vanity; he says hard things to them, by the way; yet when a stranger attacks them, how his eloquence is on fire for their defence, as in the letter of deep and honest indignation addressed to Rudyard Kipling! It is more faith that he requires of his countrymen, more of that faith which burns in himself, and which gives him, above all, the titles that so various gifts may claim, the title of a prophet.

New Books.

A KIPLING COMMONPLACE BOOK.*

Of the present volume several questionable things may be said, and one certain thing, namely, that its distinguished subject will not greatly admire it. Mr. Rudyard Kipling's passion for technical efficiency in the mechanical arts can be found writ large in many a tale and ballad. His passion for high craftsmanship in literature is no less real, though, being the dearest article of his literary faith, it is less openly avowed. The present volume, creditable enough to the author's zeal, is not equally creditable to his skill. It is technically a poor production, badly put together. Like Mr. Mantalini's countesses, it has no outline, or, at the best, like the same gentleman's dowager, a dem'd outline. Now, whatever Mr. Kipling may lack, outline he certainly has, and I am sure he will find it hard to forgive Mr. Hopkins for suggesting that he "writes as the fancy takes him, and it is difficult to imagine that he ever corrects or prunes his prodigal luxuriance."

The chief interest of the volume lies in the notes and cuttings enthusiastically assembled by the author. His own discursive criticism is less valuable, chiefly because it seems to have no foundation. Mr. Hopkins has no convictions about Mr. Kipling. Indeed, it can hardly be said that he has any consistent opinions; for his pages, with their many repetitions, include some contradictions. Thus, he asserts that "the critics for the last few years seem to have been unanimous in denouncing him—which fact, of course, recommends him to us"; a statement preposterous in more ways than one, and disproved by the general tenor of the whole volume. The concluding lists of portraits, magazine articles, and musical settings show some omissions. For instance, no mention is made of the brilliant article in the Christmas BOOKMAN for 1912 by Dixon Scott, that original and stimulating essayist, untimely slain in the country's service. Mr. Hoppé's portrait is not given; and such musical items as Walter Damrosch's grimly thrilling "Danny Deever," and Percy Grainger's series, including fine choral settings of "Tiger, Tiger," the "Morning Song in the Jungle," and "We have fed our Seas" are not named.

One other point, perhaps a little professional, needs some comment. Mr. Hopkins falls foul of teachers for not making use of Mr. Kipling's work in schools.

"It is unlikely, of course, that this advice will be taken," he writes, "as it takes a long time to make schoolmasters or

* "Rudyard Kipling: A Literary Appreciation." By R. Thurston Hopkins. 10s. 6d. net. (Simpkins.)

those who have the selection of young people's school books step aside from the old and familiar tracks. Such a thing as making a school book attractive is not thought of, and if it ever has been, was certainly rejected as foolishness."

Instead of discussing this nonsense, I venture (with much apprehension) to offer a startling, revolutionary, and totally unheard-of proposal, namely, that people who feel impelled to launch into wholesale criticism of school methods and curricula should first make an acquaintance with the inside of a school. "It is unlikely, of course, that this advice will be taken," but should Mr. Hopkins be moved to educational research he may not improbably discover that the "Jungle Books" are in the school libraries, that "Puck of Pook's Hill," "Rewards and Fairies," and the "Just So Stories" are constantly read to the younger classes, and that, among the verses memorised by children, the best of Mr. Kipling's hold a prominent place—the "Children's Song" being actually prescribed by some Education Authorities as an Empire Day hymn. It may be added, by the way, that Mr. Kipling and his publishers show no inclination to produce any of these books at a price suitable for school use, and that they can hardly be said to welcome with enthusiasm any attempts ot teachers to make school books attractive by the inclusion of Kipling selections.

It will be gathered that Mr. Hopkins' volume is in no sense critical. However, it has its merits. Those who have no objection to the protracted and discursive method of writing will find much to interest them, especially in the mass of collected information and opinions. Many of the notes, jottings, quotations, etc., would be hard to come at elsewhere. Indeed, the volume may be called a Kipling commonplace book.

Mr. Hopkins is not always acquiescent. He is right when he suggests that Mr. St. John Adcock's "In the Firing Line" gives a truer view of the modern Tommy than Mr. Kipling implies in the illiteracy of his "Soldiers Three"; but he is less happy when he gravely suggests that the line "An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China crost the Bay" is invalidated as poetry by its use of "such ugly colloquialisms" as "outer" and "crost." Shades of Burns and Barnes, as if that mattered! You cannot asperse Mr. Kipling's parts of speech. His writing, as such, is almost impeccable. Like Browning he writes Dramatic Lyrics, and his colloquialisms always fit the speaker and the occasion. What is wrong with Mr. Kipling is not that he is sometimes common in expression, but that he is sometimes common in appeal. Too often the spirit of his work is exactly that of the music hall patriotic ditty or the pantomime topical song. It is indeed a glorious thing to be a patriotic poet, almost as glorious as to be a pirate king; and there is evidence that the two occupations have been sometimes confused. True patriotism calls man to the height of his nobility. Does Mr. Kipling always voice this call? Can it be claimed for him, as Wordsworth claimed for Milton, that he gives us "manners, virtue, freedom, power?" Mr. Kipling has often sung the demands of law and obedience; but his obedience is the obedience of compulsion, not of choice. He conceives man with a weapon, obeying someone's orders, not with a tool, obeying his own creative impulses. He knows not the patriotism that rebels; the State of his dreams is ominously like a state of slavery.

Fortunately this is not the whole of Mr. Kipling. There is another Kipling, a man of genius, a seer of visions, a loving craftsman in words, a maker of clean strong prose and noble verse. His gifts are so excellent that no one would wish to dwell upon his defects, were it not that these defects are so constantly thrust upon us as his virtues. We are expected to admire him for his opinions when we want to admire him for his art. We are asked to admire his rowdyness when we want to admire his delicacy. A whole diameter of art separates the wistful evocations of "They" from the sedulous abominations of "Stalky," and we must insist on the difference if we want to find the Kipling of whom we may proudly boast. It is so fatally easy to praise him for the wrong things—to be caught by his early violence, to consent to his not infrequent commonness of mind, to think of him as if he were nothing but a leader writer for the *Daily Jingo*. There is, indeed, a great deal of the blatant journalist in him, but that is precisely what we must forgive, not admire. In the end of all, Mr. Kipling's Imperialist, Chauvinist, Conscriptionist, Protectionist, and Ulsterian predilections will neither save him nor slay him. Already the war has antiquated many of his doctrines. Literature has a way of ignoring politics. Alison is dead in spite of his Toryism; Macaulay is alive in spite of his Whiggism.

With the growth of years Mr. Kipling has lost much of the cocksureness that was the unpleasant corollary of his acutely observant nature. He knew something of many things, and (again the journalist!) he made the most of his knowledge, not to say advertised it. Mark Twain, in that inimitable way of his, summed up the youthful Kipling for all time:

> "He spent a couple of hours with me, and at the end of that time I had surprised him as much as he had surprised me—and the honours were easy. I believed that he knew more than any person I had met before, and I knew that he knew that I knew less than any person he had met before. . . . Between us we cover all knowledge; he knows all that can be known, and I know the rest."

Excellent criticism—as humour often is!

Time, too, has turned Mr. Kipling from a kind of giddy harumfrodite, Hindu and Yankee too, into the reverent interpreter of England's shy, intimate beauty. To measure his advance you need only compare the brassy journalism of "From Sea to Sea" with the poems and stories that have Sussex for their background. In discovering England he has discovered the best of himself. His early blend of the far East and the wild West was not guiltless of vulgarity. Imperialist as he thinks himself, Mr. Kipling is greatest when he is a little Englander. It is when he writes of "They" that he has our heart. May the lost child's kiss never fail to brush his hand in the darkness and the silence!

GEORGE SAMPSON.

CHRIST AT CARNIVAL.*

This new poet, already memorable through the welcome accorded to her title-poem on its publication in the "English Review," is so indubitably fine that even to quarrel with her may be called a pleasant exercise in a world where trite versification seems far commoner than brave individuality such as hers. The melody and passion of her work are indissoluble, and only the authentic fire could light such flame, burning in language fierce, economical, visualising, and almost always making music, even when its bitter scorn shows something altogether hideous, as in one poem which, if set side by side with the finished and delicate bit of portraiture which adorns the last page of the book, would suggest the kind of contrast to be found between some brilliant sketch of *Chicot* by Whistler, and a realistic presentment by some modern Hogarth of a blood-stained corpse in the *morgue* labelled "Fools"—terrible in its sordid realism and the grin upon its forsaken features, yet through all its sardonic humour suggesting something of the high solemnity of a painter so far apart from Hogarth as Albert Dürer.

It may still further indicate the width of the poet's range to compare the title poem with that masterly lyric, "The Chalice of Circe," in which Chopin and Swinburne might almost have mingled their powers—a poem of subtle executive skill and didactic emotional force—for, although both deal symbolically with eternal things, the one is dignified drama, the other a whirlpool of intricate rhyme and rhythm, giving proof, if such were needed, that the unfettered simplicity and grace of other measures used by Muriel Stuart imply no lack of ease in handling the regularised stanzas of a recurrent form.

* "Christ at Carnival, and Other Poems." By Muriel Stuart. 3s. 6d. net. (Herbert Jenkins.)

But there are poems in this volume which despite sympathetic admiration, nevertheless arouse resentment by the ethical attitude which repeatedly dwells on the corruption of death and the brevity of passion, as though these summed up human life, rather than on the eternity of essential Beauty, and the immortality of essential Love. It is true that the almost insolent power and plain speaking of such a poem as "Fools" is worth many sermons, and that lyrics such as "Wild Geese Across the Moon," are obviously intended as dramatic studies of other people's moods and not at all as personal confessions. But there remains the fact that one who could write such a poem as "Christ at Carnival," in which the magic of the poet's phrase is forgotten in the moving sincerity of the spiritual appeal, should never have seemed to set the seal of verity on the belief that the chief treasure of life can be buried in the grave or rot away in earthiness, though "The Dead Moment"—one of the poems in which this false notion is used with telling effect as an image—is one of the most haunting and beautiful in the volume.

The book can be read from end to end for sheer lyrical ecstasy and impassioned tenderness, of which one random snatch may here be given from the stanzas "To a Gipsy":

"Then I shall have no need of song to sing you—
No word to speak that day—
My laugh the spirit of the wild shall fling you,
My kiss the fresh lips of the gale shall bring you,
The stream my name shall say:
As, from the ditch, some hedge-wraith dartling out,
Shall prick the horse's ear,
Your heart, astir, whose word you shall not doubt,
Shall whisper I am near,
And with the old sweet tang of tears shall sting you."

ANNIE MATHESON.

THE SAILORMAN IN LETTERS.*

This is just such a book as the late Frank T. Bullen was fond of putting together—witness his "Idylls of the Sea," "Sea Spray," "A Bundle of Shakings," and others. But Mr. Bone—or should one write "Captain," or "Commodore," or go back to the older "Master"?—anyhow, this latest sailorman in letters has more of the grip of the thing than Bullen had generally. The book is a literary "sack o' shakings," the odds and ends of nautical life put into sketches and short stories; and the author may not be so choice in his language as Bullen was, yet his material never runs so thin. Truth to tell, some of them, such as "Errors of Judgment" and "The Merchant's Cup," are decidedly "meaty"—say "salt horse" at its best. Unlike John Masefield's "Tarpaulin Muster" as they are in treatment and manner, their quality is not inferior to that collection of sea yarns and essays. Mr. Bone has his own "touch," as every distinct individuality must have; yet the "touch" is entirely true. His men are sailors, where he makes "shellbacks" the subject, as in "A Deep Water Critic"; and one is never in doubt about that most difficult of literary presentation of foreign scenes, the atmosphere. In this book we look in at many ports the world around, and nothing could be more truly depicted than "The Scribe," "The 'Real' Cashmiri Shawl," "Old Paoli," "At Bazaar," etc. How easily we catch again the humour of it all! How clearly we see once more the native trader with his small wares and his large, subtle wiles! Again in "Dropping the Pilot," "Unclaimed Rewards," and other sketches of a like cast, there is the deeper note of gale and ocean tragedy, all as well done as the lighter things are. Mr. Bone does not directly philosophise over his subjects. He writes straight on, as Mark Antony speaks; but, all the same, we don't miss the moral. It is there, hull-high and all bold on the skyline of the matter; yet it is never obtrusive, and this is one of Mr. Bone's excellencies—a quality that Bullen lacked even in his best essays. To the superficial mind some of these sketches will be merely good descriptive work, almost photographic in its accuracy, although by no means crowded with detail; but the mind of another make will see in them a quiet depth of moralising and an unparaded strength that are distinctive. Whether it be that these are individual matters arising from personality, or are only natural parts of the subjects chosen, is of no moment here. It is enough to know that Mr. Bone gets them in without effort, without ostentation. And this is one of the high virtues of the literary craft; for the merely descriptive pen would depict the same scenes and events without leaving any other impression on the reader's mind than that he had visualised the happenings. In the one case we should have the skeleton, or, at most, an outline of the living thing; in the other we have both body and soul, and are aware of the latter whilst our attention is all on the former. Another virtue in Mr. Bone's writing is the fact that it is always redolent of deep water; alas! that it is slangy at times and too often near to being so. His shipboard phraseology is truer than the work of any other hand that has forsaken the marling-spike—or the sextant—for the pen. He does, however, at times use slang as though it were good English; and this is the only fault I can see in a book that is as true of salt water and its shore fringe as any book needs to be.

J. E. PATTERSON.

* "Broken Stowage." By David W. Bone. 6s. (Duckworth.)

A CATHOLIC MISFIRE.*

It has been said that you cannot indict a whole people. It is at least as true that a people cannot indict its past. It can regret it, and it can dream of what "might have been." But it has no warrant or standard to judge its preceding generations over a long period, and certainly of all indictments that it can attempt to draw the most dubious will be an indictment of consistent error in one direction pursued from age to age in a world for ever changing, developing, and exploding. Yet it is to this impossible and not very timely task that Mr. Chesterton addresses himself in these pages. He seeks to convict British statesmen of centuries of injurious pro-Germanism.

We were wrong, he tells us, to back up Frederick the Great, wrong to share German and Austrian distrust of the French Revolution, wrong to accept Prussia's aid against Napoleon, wrong to abandon Napoleon III. to Bismarck, wrong to save Turkey, wrong to cede Heligoland, and damnably wrong in that we did all these things

* "The Crimes of England." By G. K. Chesterton. (Palmer & Hayward.)

The Bridge,

described in "A Girl of the Limberlost," under which Phil found Elnora working to remove a cocoon.

under pro-German obsessions. These are vast propositions. If they are to be put forward in all seriousness as a criticism of national acts tending in one direction to one disaster, they call for a much more elaborate and documented treatment than they receive in the ten short chapters of this small book. But I do not see how the indictment could lie, or how it would be possible for Mr. Chesterton or any other philosopher of history to present German influence in England, and our responses to it as a concatenation of errors, each of which ought to have made the next one impossible. But Mr. Chesterton seems to have no forensic misgivings, and he sees this alien strand in our national garment as something that can be traced "back to the beginning of the Hanoverian Succession; and thence back to the quarrel between the King and the lawyers which had issue at Naseby; and thence again to the angry exit of Henry VIII. from the mediæval council of Europe." Nay, he reproaches Freeman and Green for teaching us to be proud of our descent from Hengist and Horsa, and not from King Arthur. Such chases seem to lose themselves in the air. This one loses itself in Mr. Chesterton, who soon convinces us that if England's dealings with Germany in the past have betrayed anything it is his own mediæval ideals and preferences.

We have here, in short, a Catholic tract based on what Mr. Chesterton, no doubt, regards as common ground between himself and his readers—detestation of Prussia. But here he exaggerates. Sensible men condemn Prussia as heartily as Mr. Chesterton, and even more effectually—in that they condemn her for things which can be adjudicated by existing standards. What Prussia is to-day we know, but we shall add nothing to our patriotism or our dignity by seeking to prove that she has never been anything but a moral leper, and that her touch has always contaminated England. Nor need we love to be scourged by Mr. Chesterton with rather mythical whips because, in the same breath, he scourges Prussia with very mythical scorpions. We are mindful of the fact if you denounce an individual or a nation over much, you end by blaspheming our common human nature. But Mr. Chesterton has his own reason for denouncing Germany, not merely for her sins of to-day, but as a poison in our blood. It is that he sees her as the enemy of the old faith and the birthplace of the Reformation.

This is the thesis which gives unity or progression to what Mr. Chesterton calls "the great modern mistakes of England," in connection with Germany. But the unity and progression exist in his own mind, not in the minds of his readers; and they are supported by sweeping generalisations and critical ingenuities which will deceive nobody, not even thinking Catholics. Thus he conceives of the Napoleonic wars as a great spiritual conflict between the new spirit, as represented by France, and the hierarchical faiths, as represented by Holy Russia and the Holy Roman Empire of Austria. He would tell us at this date that neither England nor Prussia had any business to be in arms. "Neither of them had any tincture of Catholic mysticism. Neither of them had any tincture of Jacobin idealism. Neither of them, therefore, had any real moral reason for being in arms at all." And this is true if the issue were what Mr. Chesterton thinks, and if any one could have seen it. But such ideas did not enter Pitt's head nor the heads of the English people when they set themselves to beat Bony abroad and beat him off in Sussex. They conceived that they had the best of all reasons to make war—the preservation of their country as they knew and loved it. No wonder that the strain of such an argument leads Mr. Chesterton into such trivialities as the following:

"The people had no religion to fight for, as in Russia or La Vendée. The parson was no longer a priest, and had long been a small squire. Already that one great blank in our land had made snobbishness the only religion of South England; and turned rich men into a mythology. The effect can be well summed up in that decorous abbreviation by which our rustics speak of 'Lady's Bedstraw,' where they once spoke of 'Our Lady's Bedstraw.' We have dropped the comparatively democratic adjective and kept the aristocratic noun."

Judged by such standards and prepossessions we have indeed committed many crimes, but they are crimes against Mr. Chesterton and not against England.

It is over true that we have committed crimes and blunders against ourselves and others, but it is both more reasonable and more cheerful to believe that these have had other and more various origins than German influence. To say, as Mr. Chesterton does, of one of the greatest of them that "we should hardly have seen such a nightmare as the Anglicising of Ireland if we had not already seen the Germanising of England," is to make an arbitrary pattern of history. But to say of the modern phase of this influence that it is "symbolically marked out by Cartaret, proud of talking German at the beginning of the period, and Lord Haldane, proud of talking German at the end of it" is merely cheap and unworthy.

When all is said, Mr. Chesteron is a patriot and a man of faith. If instead of delivering his peculiar message in a pamphlet founded on crazy analogies and dialectics he had delivered it as a poem in terms of satire and lament it might have carried, not conviction, but many helpful convictions, to our minds. Such a suggestion may seem to exceed a reviewer's privilege, but I think that Mr. Chesterton's theme and courage called for that higher form, so easily his own. On that plane he might have seen as inevitable tragedy much that he presents as a ledger account of crime and blunder. And it is this larger view that will help us when the greatest storm in history shall have rocked itself to rest.

WILFRED WHITTEN.

VIGÉE LEBRUN.*

In the year 1760 a little rustic procession "might have been seen" (as G. P. R. James used to say) approaching the high road from Epernon to Paris; a rough peasant trudging by country ways leading a donkey, and jolting along in a panier on the donkey's back a little girl who was Mademoiselle Vigée. She was being recalled to Paris whither she was to travel in a "cabriolet" that was to meet her at some point on the high road, and take her away for ever from the poor cottage home where she had been nursed for the five years of her infancy. Eighty years later Mademoiselle Vigée was Madame Lebrun looking back on her long and successful life to this rustic journey as her first distinct memory. She had had many friends in those intervening years but none had served her more faithfully than the good peasant woman who was her foster-mother in the far-away cottage among the wooded hills of that pleasant land of France.

From five to the mature age of eleven Mademoiselle Vigée passed the years in a convent, and her education being then completed she came home for good.

Her father was an artist, and as the child developed her extraordinary talent for painting she received every encouragement. He died, indeed, when Elisabeth Vigée was but thirteen years old; but she had a talent for making friends as well as for art, and the painters who came in and out of her father's studio and had been wont to notice her there, continued their good-natured patronage and pushed her on to the success she merited and achieved.

Her mother was of peasant origin, a strict and austere Catholic with a good deal to put up with apparently from an artist husband of lax morals. However, she contracted a second marriage more unfortunate than her first, with a man who turned out to be avaricious, grasping and tyrannical, and who was most obnoxious to his stepdaughter, the young girl artist. Elisabeth Vigée was so uncomfortable that she hailed as a means of escape her mother's plan for her own marriage, and she accepted a scamp who had imposed himself on her mother as a well-to-do tradesman, a dealer in pictures and antiques; but who was in reality burdened with debt, and whose only way of living, henceforth, was to be by exploiting his wife's

* "Vigée Lebrun: Her Life, Works, and Friendships." By W. H. Helm. (Hutchinson.)

talent. Madame Lebrun earned large sums as a portrait painter and her husband appropriated the money; and after they had been separated for many years in their later life, she was still generous to him and paid his debts.

She had one daughter, the Julie who appears in so many of her charming pictures, who was a spoiled child, grew up to be selfish and headstrong, made a marriage of which her mother disapproved and died young.

This was the background of Madame Lebrun's life, and one sufficiently sordid and of sad colour. Yet one remembers how Mrs. Oliphant in her autobiography, when she is looking back over years of anxiety and labour and loss, says, "But I would not say I have had an unhappy life. There are times when my heart jumps up and I am happy. I wonder whether this is want of feeling or mere temperament and elasticity or if it is a special compensation. 'Werena my heart licht I wad dee.'"

Madame Lebrun lived in times of whose significance she had no idea. Yet one would think, when she looked back in her prosperous old age to her first remembered journey in life, her thoughts must have lingered around the memory of another journey made in a momentous year: when she escaped from France with her little girl, travelling by *diligence* and "in disguise," and fearing to be stopped as she left Paris. Upon that night, however, when the *diligence* rumbled through the Saint Antoine quarter all was quiet, for the people had walked to Versailles and back that day and were gone to bed "dog tired." It was the night of that October day when the unhappy King and Queen had been brought from Versailles to Paris by a revolutionary mob hounded on by yelling women. If the significance of the times was not to be guessed by Madame Lebrun, so also the gloom cast on her mind by the tragedies of the Revolution never lasted long. In Vienna one day she saw in a gazette "a list of persons who had been guillotined, wherein were the names of nine of her acquaintances"; and after that she never looked again at newspapers "until those troubled days were over." Hers was one of those buoyant natures, as her biographer says, "which so long as the immediate evidence of anguish and death can be kept away from them are not very deeply affected." She floated lightly and gaily down the stream of life, and even so lightly does her biographer tell her story, readably, cheerfully, and in pleasant vein.

F. E. PHILLIPS.

MOBY LANE.*

There are a good many things that you will not find in "Moby Lane and Thereabouts." You won't find the war there; nor lurid and sensational adventures; nor exciting plots; nor morbid moral problems. The society you will meet there is not high—not as a rule. You get a glimpse of gentility in such stories as "The Squire," "The Last of the Gentry," or "Pucklefield Manor"; but not enough to worry about. What "Moby Lane" really has to offer you are stories and sketches of the everyday life of ordinary people—that is, of people who seem ordinary until Mr. Lyons picks them up and casually shows you how extraordinary they are.

"The Mobies have lifted the latch of my heart," says he, in the opening story, "and spring has entered in"; and that is just the effect the book has on the hearts of his readers. It is a book for the spring, for that reason; and especially for a spring in war time. The Mobies comprise

* "Moby Lane and Thereabouts." By A. Neil Lyons. 6s. (John Lane.)

Singing Water,

described in "The Harvester."

a man and wife, seven children and a disreputable perambulator. They tour the country and subsist by traffic in old rags, bones and bottles. They live under hedges in all weathers; their children were born in ditches; and without in the least sentimentalising over them, Mr. Lyons gets them all alive and individualised into half a dozen pages and makes you feel they are a family worth knowing—a family you have to laugh at because he brings you into full sympathy with them, and you like them so well.

It is no use trying to tell you what the stories are about. Some of them are about nothing; but that does not matter in the least. The art with which Mr. Lyons interests you in the people of his book is the thing that matters; that and the quaint, shrewd, kindly humour with which he writes of them. Sometimes it is the humour of incident that takes you most; sometimes the humour of the dialogue—and the dialogue is always delightfully good; usually it is the humour of character. You read the book from start to finish for the sheer joy of reading it, and at the end you emphatically agree with Mr. Blatchford that the man who wrote it is a poet and an artist; a humorist of unique gifts, and "one of the best short story writers in the world."

THE YOUNG POETS.

"Georgian Poetry, 1913–1915"[1] contains poems by a baker's dozen of the young ones, some of whom must be maturing by this time. Two of the best are dead—Rupert Brooke and James McElroy Flecker. One is very glad that Rupert Brooke lived for the war and to take part in it, since that gave us the noble poetry of the "England" sonnets.

One sees in this collection whither poetry was drifting before the war. Poetry, subject to an eternal law like everything else, rises and falls, waxes and wanes. In a long peace it tends to become luxurious and emasculated by its insistence on sex. When things go too well with us we are travelling towards the *Decadence*. The war must be a bracing, a medicinal tonic, clean fire and sharp cold water and a fresh wind upon this luxuriousness, as of Nineveh and the other Pagan cities.

Gordon Bottomley's remarkable poetic play, "King Lear," though it is full of passionate poetry, is marred by the curious unwholesomeness of much of it. His Goneril is really beautiful and most deeply felt. We feel her like a cold, pure wind in the book. Some of her passages are indeed worthy of the Elizabethans who are the poet's models. She is a glorious wild animal, and the swift rush of words well depicts her. Mr. Bottomley has a beautiful diction. But what purpose do the two

[1] "Georgian Poetry, 1913–1915." 3s. 6d. net. (The Poetry Book Shop.)

horrible old women serve? They are gratuitously ugly, like a patch of rottenness in a beautiful fruit. These horrible night-birds fill one with disgust. And what a pity, for Mr. Bottomley's poetry is noble, clean, plangent. There are so many wonderful passages that one hardly knows which to choose. Goneril speaks for herself:

"I dreamt that I was swimming shoulders up,
And drave the bed-clothes spreading to the floor:
Coldness awoke me: through the waning darkness
I heard far hounds give shivering aery tongue,
Remote, withdrawing, suddenly faint and near.
I leapt and saw a pack of stretching weasels
Hunt a pale coney in a soundless rush.
Their elfin and thin yelping pierced my heart
As with an unseen beauty long awaited.
Wolfskin and cloak I buckled over this nightgown,
And took my honoured spear from my bed-side
Where none but I may touch its purity—
And sped as lightly down the dewy bank,
As any mothy owl that hunts quick mice.
They went crying, crying, but I lost them
Before I stept, with the first tips of light,
On Raven Crag near by the Druid Stones.
So I paused there, and, stooping, pressed my hands
Against the stony bed of the clear stream.
Then entered I the circle and raised up
My shining hand in stern cold adoration,
Even as the first great gleam went up the sky."

There is real enchantment in this poetry, so that one can forgive Mr. Bottomley for retelling Shakespeare.

There could hardly be a more lovely simplicity than one finds in the poems of W. H. Davies. His songs have all the quips and turns and conceits and the purity of the birds' songs:

"Sweet Chance that led my steps abroad
Beyond the town where wild flowers grow—
A rainbow and a cuckoo, Lord.
How rich and great the times are now!
Know all, ye sheep
And cows that keep
On staring that I stand so long
In grass that's wet from heavy rain.
A rainbow and a cuckoo's song
May never come together again."

That is an admirable simplicity, and having it one could very well dispense with "A Fleeting Passion," which strikes a jarring note in these songs of innocence. Must Mr. Davies follow a bad fashion?

The two Irish poets, Stephens and Ledwidge, come oddly between Wilfrid Wilson Gibson and Lascelles Abercrombie. I am far from denying the energy and the force, the positive beauty of these two dramatic poets. The two Irish poets are as innocent as a daisy, whereas the English poets are curiously preoccupied with the life of the English village and its often squalid drama. It is as though the agricultural labourer, having been neglected up to the time of Hardy,

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or made to serve a charming and insincere convention—witness Marlowe's

> "I am the Mower Damon, known
> By all the meadows I have mown,
> On me the morn her dew distils
> Before her darling daffodils"

—must now have his due, and occupy the close attention of our younger poets.

The poetry of Ralph Hodgson has certainly a Blake-like quality of vision and of expression:

> "The music of a lion strong
> That shakes a hill the whole night long—
> A hill as loud as he.
> The twitter of a mouse among
> Melodious greenery.
> The ruby's and the rainbow's song,
> The nightingale's—all three;
> The song of life that wells and flows,
> From every leopard, lark or rose,
> And everything that gleams or goes
> Lack-lustre in the sea."

All these things Mr. Hodgson hears, and sees as Blake heard and saw them.

When all is said and done, whether one likes or dislikes, there is a wealth of poetry in this Georgian Poetry. No fear of the succession failing.

Here is another anthology, very simple after the Georgians, a handful, a little sheaf of Irish verse, mainly martial, gathered into a little gold-coloured book to be sold for the purpose of providing comforts for the Irish soldiers. In "A Little Book of Irish Verse"[2] Mr. Albert White has given us some very good things. He has had the good luck to net Mr. Yeats among his poets. The book comes from the office of the *Ulster Guardian*, which in itself is of good omen. The editor might have placed on the title page Allingham's lines:

> "We are one, at heart, if you be Ireland's friend,
> Though leagues asunder our opinions tend.
> There are but two great parties in the end."

"Some Verse," by F. S.,[3] is a witty book, full of clever parodies and quips and cranks in the manner of Hood and Calverly and Austin Dobson, with a gay scholasticism, and one or two serious poems to show that it is a poet who dons the cap and bells. "The Lament of the Sailor's Widow" and "A Christmas Legend" are poems of a very beautiful quality. When one has smiled over the deftness and fun of the other poems one is suddenly grave with these. F. S. ought to give us serious poetry well worth the having one of these days.

There is a good deal of quiet and refined beauty in "The Queen's Quest"[4] by E. L. Whitcombe. The religious poems are very deeply felt. The poetry is in the manner of Tennyson, and is restful for those who are satisfied with quiet poetry which does not cause violent emotions either of pleasure or pain.

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KATHARINE TYNAN.

[2] "A Little Book of Irish Verse." Edited by Albert C. White. 1s. (Heath, Cranton & Ouseley.)

[3] "Some Verse." By F. S. 2s. net. (Sidgwick & Jackson.)

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[5] "Rose of My Life." 3s. 6d. net. (Herbert Jenkins.)

[6] "The Wind in the Temple." By Edmund John. 1s. net. 'Erskine Macdonald.)

Novel Notes.

BEGGARS ON HORSEBACK. By F. Tennyson Jesse. 6s. (Heinemann.)

Here are eight stories of the weird, ghastly order, written with undoubted power. Miss Jesse has set herself to make the blood creep, and she has done it nearly every time. But the sheer horror of the tales is redeemed by artistic reticence. The last describes the sudden conversion of a rascally captain who has agreed to scuttle his ship; it is a fitting climax to the series, in some respects the most impressive and penetrating. In "A Garden Enclosed," Miss Jesse is more subtle, more psychological. We prefer her in the tales where there is more action to set out the ghastliness, as, for example, in the story of how an innocent girl was persuaded to poison her father, or in "The Mask," a Cornish tale which Balzac might have penned. "The Man with Two Mouths" is another Cornish story of wild life, in which the man, not the woman, is punished—a vivid story of treachery and revenge. The title is far-fetched, but Miss Jesse has achieved a true success in these eight pieces of concentrated intensity; she produces her effect by a combination of realistic detail and psychological suggestion, and this is probably the reason why the two stories which have less of the former, fail to impress the reader so sharply as the other six. The note of weirdness is not caught quite so accurately as the note of terror. But this is practically the only criticism we can pass upon the book, and we pass it almost reluctantly, in view of the singular merit of these studies. A lesser artist would have made gruesome pictures out of such materials as Miss Jesse has chosen to handle; eeriness, agony, revenge, and hallucinations, are easily spoiled by a coarse touch. It is not so in these pages. They are a sequence of varied, searching studies in life outside the pale, sometimes pitiful, sometimes horrible, but always free from the glaring chromolithograph colours of an inferior artist. The shudder they produce may not be pleasant, but it is legitimate.

"K." By Mary Roberts Reinhart. 6s. net. (Smith, Elder.)

Doctor-worship, if some American novelists are to be believed, is the popular cult across the Atlantic at present. Hence "K" is not as the simple English reader might imagine, Lord Kitchener, but a doctor, tall as one of Ouida's guardsmen, good as an apostle, simple as a little child—the super-man of America in fact. Over against him, serving as a foil is a second doctor—very clever, very handsome, not exactly wicked, but "naughty," shall we say. Two hospital nurses—one the angel-child of the wards, the other a demon of jealousy, who risks the lives of innocent patients in order to ruin her rivals, complete the colour-scheme of the book. All four characters are standardised, like the spare parts of a Ford car, and if by any untoward accident the authoress had not been able to complete her work, the missing parts could have been easily supplied. For the rest, the story is interesting, well told and pleasantly written. Miss Reinhart drives her team with the skill of a practised hand, and brings her readers to a happy ending.

BILDAD THE QUILL-DRIVER. By William Caine. 6s. (The Bodley Head).

Here is Mr. William Caine in his maddest motley, jesting away to his heart's content. The scene is the province of Maraudistan, but you may think of it as Bagdad—the Bagdad of a Drury Lane pantomime with the comedians in full patter. Bildad is the last of a long line of leather-dressers, and does not take kindly to his father's trade. So a wise woman is called in, and Bildad's future is decided by a quill plucked from her attendant gander. Allah having decreed that Bildad shall be a Writer, the Scribe-to-be armed with his pen and his wits is forthwith launched upon as ludicrous a career as ever troubled a good man's

dreams. Owing to a passion for secreting his poems about his person, Bildad is mistaken for a "fat boy" and is promptly transferred to a freak museum, where he suffers from the playful attentions of a coquettish giantess nine feet high. This is a typical chapter of Bildad's career. It is difficult to characterise adequately this wholly irresponsible book with its perpetual banter and parody, its epigrams and doggerel and upside-down flights of philosophy. The story is cleverly illustrated by H. M. Bateman.

THE HEART OF A MAN. By Richard Aumerle Maher. 6s. (Pitman.)

"The Heart of a Man," is in every way a "big" book. It is the story of the eternal battle between capital and labour, wherein the poor are for ever crushed between the power of wealth and knowledge on the one hand, and the forces of cold and hunger on the other; a book full of great thoughts and powerful situations, through which breathes life itself. Written very evidently by a member of the Roman Catholic Church, of necessity it presents only one side, although that is a deeply interesting and illuminating side, of many questions; and one must remember while reading Mr. Maher's splendid appeal for the workman, that an employee frequently has not enough restraint to succeed as a capitalist, or the kind of courage required to deal with financial risks. The scene of the story is laid in Milton, "a one-mill town" in the Adirondack foothills, where the townspeople slave day and night in a machine milling plant for the privilege of living, in order to fill the pockets of John Sargent, the owner, "a dynamic power over men and machines." You realise each detail of the strike of the workers whose every claim is ignored, and the famine they suffer in consequence; for the author paints fine descriptions, wherein each word is a vivid bit of colour applied by a sure brush. You feel upon terms of intimate friendship with John Loyd, the leader of the people; and Dean Driscoll the Catholic priest, who is so endearingly human, and yet so great a power for good; and Sargent who, devoid of principle, will ruin or kill whoever hinders his plans, yet in the end—but I will leave you to find out for yourself how wonderful a thing the heart of a man, even of an obviously bad man, may be.

THE BLOWS OF CIRCUMSTANCE. By Beatrice Kelston. 6s. (John Lane.)

Miss Kelston's new novel is the story of a single character. The other people who flit through her pages have only walking parts allotted them. Amalie Gayne is the leading lady. In her the authoress has imagined a character of great possibilities, though it may be questioned whether she has done justice to her own conception. One feels that such a woman as Amalie Gayne, the great actress, should have mastered her fate. As it is, the suggestion of the Tennysonian title is not fulfilled. She failed to "grapple with her evil star" and finally despaired of finding the solution of her life's riddle. It may, however, be that her temperament was in itself the fatal blow of circumstance—that "unspiritual God" as Byron called it, beneath whose bludgeonings so many lives are crushed. Miss Kelston's account of a child's mind in the opening chapters is wonderfully well done. This story can hardly be called inspiriting or seasonable—but it is a strong, sombre, thoughtful book with here and there an X-ray glance in the dark places of life, and those who read it once will probably be drawn to read it again. Perhaps there is no higher test for any book.

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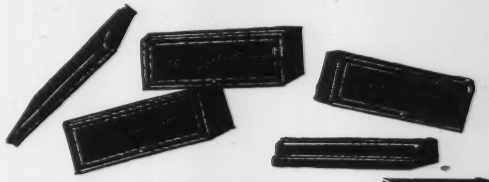

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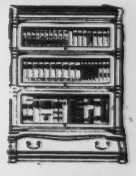

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The Bookman's Table.

GEOGRAPHY AND WORLD POWER. By James Fairgrieve, M.A., F.R.G.S. 3s. net. (London University Press.)

The influence of geography on the conditions of the races of mankind has never been scientifically dealt with before. It has frequently been alluded to in a vague manner by writers on imperial affairs, but never clearly defined or adequately expressed. And yet it must be of peculiar interest to the reader of the British Empire, whom it naturally concerns in the highest degree; but we, as a race, have hitherto been inclined to take most things for granted, and not to enquire too closely into the cause of things. This, no doubt, has its advantages, but the disadvantages, too, are great, and not least among them has been the loss of that fascinating study which Mr. Fairgrieve has skilfully set forth in the present work. Mr. Fairgrieve's contention is that hitherto we have paid too much attention to the actors and not enough to the setting of the stage, which, he shows, and indeed we all recognise, has profoundly influenced them. The habit of reading (or writing) universal histories has gone out, owing no doubt to the impossibility of acquiring any advantage from them by reason of their diffuseness. It might therefore be recommended that one should read this present work instead; it is brief, lucid, and moreover, as we have said, does justice to unconscious factors hitherto neglected. It is an epitome of the world's history viewed from the standpoint of staging, to keep up the author's metaphor. There are a large number of maps illustrating the author's various points, and an excellent index. When we are all turning our attention to matters of world-politics, Mr. Fairgrieve's work is doubly welcome.

THE BATTLE FIENDS. By E. H. Visiak. 1s. net. (Elkin Mathews.)

Mr. Visiak is no orthodox rhymester, and if you come to him for grace and daintiness and pretty fancies you will be disappointed. He has no drawing-room tricks, but is gloriously at home in those rough places where life and men are picturesque and lawless. He likes human nature raw. Buccaneers and pirates appeal to him prevailingly; roaring seas and the voice of the wild thrill him and set him singing. There is a sturdy forcefulness, a stark, direct simplicity in his manner of thought and utterance that braces you like a shouting north-wind. Better than "The Battle Fiends" are the bizarre snatches of song that he scatters through this little book, such as "Heart-break," "Everyman," "The Convict Pirates," "The Drover," and in particular "Two Loves," a grim ditty of an old sea-captain who loved his ship and his bottle. In these and the ballads of the sea you have the essential Visiak, his distinctive note—a note with which most of us are in harmony in these warring, strenuous days.

AEROPLANES AND AIRSHIPS. SUBMARINES, TORPEDOES AND MINES. By W. E. Dommett. 1s. net each. (Whittaker.)

These little volumes are intended for the general reader as well as for the reader with technical knowledge. They are illustrated with many excellent photographs and diagrams, and present in compact and readable form a survey of the main problems that beset the would-be navigator of the air and the "under-sea," and also of the ingenious devices with which these problems have been successfully met. Special attention is given to the exploits of submarines and aircraft in the present war. The chief types, together with their steering and propelling plant and war equipment, are described with as much detail as is consistent with lucidity and the requirements of the Censor. With books so accessible as these, the man in the street has an excellent opportunity of bringing up-to-date his knowledge of the most modern and terrible of war-engines.

EUROPE IN ARMS. A Concise History of the Great European War. By Everard Wyrall. Vol. I. (Bertram Wright).

"Europe in Arms" is scarcely one of those histories of the War which a man can slip into his pocket to read on the Tube; it is in fact a work of somewhat unwieldy proportions, designed rather for the study than for the tram or train. It has this disadvantage, that is to say, that you cannot easily read it holding it in your hands; you must needs rest it on a table. This objection apart, there is a good deal to be said for Mr. Everard Wyrall's account of the Pan-Great-Power conflict. The illustrations of places, ships, forts, armies, aeroplanes, etc., are admirably novel and clearly reproduced; the maps and plans, which, however, we should have preferred to see placed in a pocket at the end of the volume, are on a sufficiently large scale to be really useful, and have the additional advantage of giving various elevations; while the type in which the text is printed is splendidly bold and clear without being too heavily leaded. As for the letterpress, we can only say that, having read a good many chapters right through and dipped here and there to sample accounts of particular engagements, it strikes us as being as perspicuous, as detailed, as intelligible and as correct as the information at the command of the writer could make it.

Notes on New Books.

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Hazell's Annual is one of the year books that the professional or business man cannot do without. It is a mine of information on current events and the public life of the time. To the records of Government Offices this year it adds the Ministry of Munitions, with a list of its staff. The war is writ large up and down many of its pages; there is a list of recipients of the Victoria Cross down to December 7th last; and a Roll of Honour, containing the names of many of the fallen. Aviation, Naval operations, International Treaties, the new taxation, war and general finance, trade, shipping, agriculture, railways—all the manifold activities of present-day life are competently and lucidly dealt with. Egypt, the new South-West African Protectorate, the former German Pacific Possessions—all receive due attention; the section concerning the British Colonies and Self-Governing Dominions offers careful, authoritative statistics, and is excellently up-to-date. The usefulness of the book is completed by a full and exact Index.

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